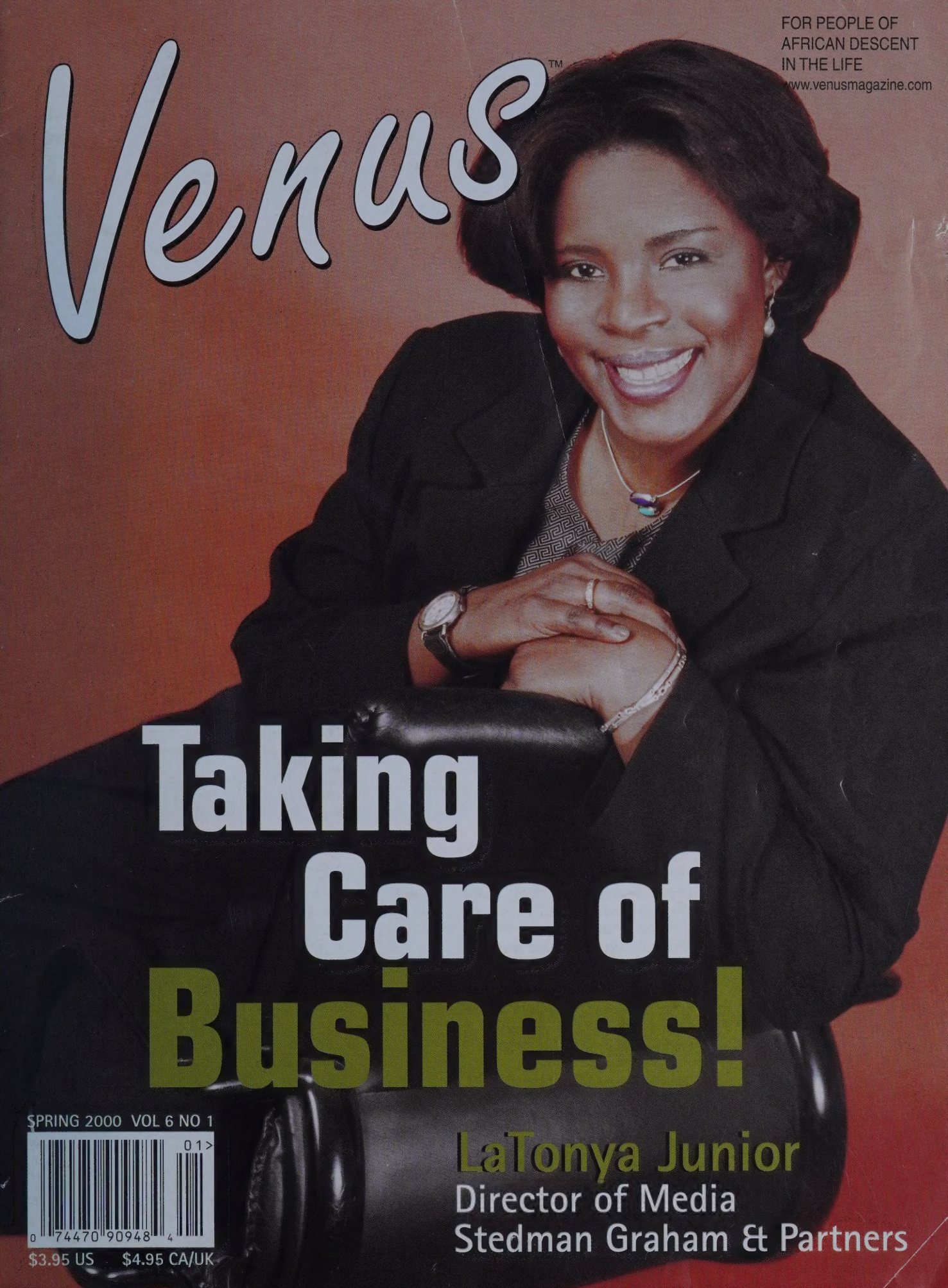
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If you're HIV+, CRIXIVAN may help you live a longer, healthier life.

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE THERAPY

CRIXIVAN in combination with antiretroviral agents is a powerful protease inhibitor that fights HIV and is among the preferred treatments for HIV in federal healthcare guidelines.[1] CRIXIVAN can help reduce the chance of illnesses and death associated with HIV; CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 T-cell count, as shown in studies over a one-year period. Some patients may not experience these effects. CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS.

DURABLE RESULTS

In a landmark study, over 90% of 31 patients receiving a combination of CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC reduced their serum viral load below the limit of detection after 24 weeks. Importantly, the limited number of patients who chose to stay with the study for longer periods of time maintained these results through the one-year mark. In a separate study, 30% of 261 patients receiving dual therapy of CRIXIVAN and AZT had serum viral loads below the limit of detection at 48 weeks. In another landmark study, 43% of 40 patients receiving combination therapy with CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC had plasma viral loads below the limit of detection at 40 weeks. In this study of over 1,000 patients, the group of patients receiving CRIXIVAN along with 3TC and AZT achieved a reduction in deaths and AIDS-defining illnesses over those taking 3TC and AZT alone. Overall, the number of deaths was inadequate to assess the impact of CRIXIVAN on survival. Blood viral loads were measured by available tests and the virus may still be present in other organ systems.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CRIXIVAN

CRIXIVAN can be taken with a light meal or on an empty stomach. Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN may develop kidney stones. For some, this can lead to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure. Drinking at least 6 glasses of water each day may help reduce the chance of forming a kidney stone. Other side effects reported include rapid breakdown of red blood cells and liver problems.

As with other protease inhibitors, changes in body fat, increased bleeding in some patients with hemophilia, and increased blood sugar levels or diabetes have been reported. Additionally, severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients also taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins." There are some common medications and AIDS-related medications you should not take with CRIXIVAN. Discuss all medications you are taking or plan to take with your doctor.

For more detailed information about CRIXIVAN, please read the information immediately following this advertisement.

[1] Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in HIV-Infected Adults and Adolescents. Panel on Clinical Practices for Treatment of HIV Infection, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), May 5, 1999.

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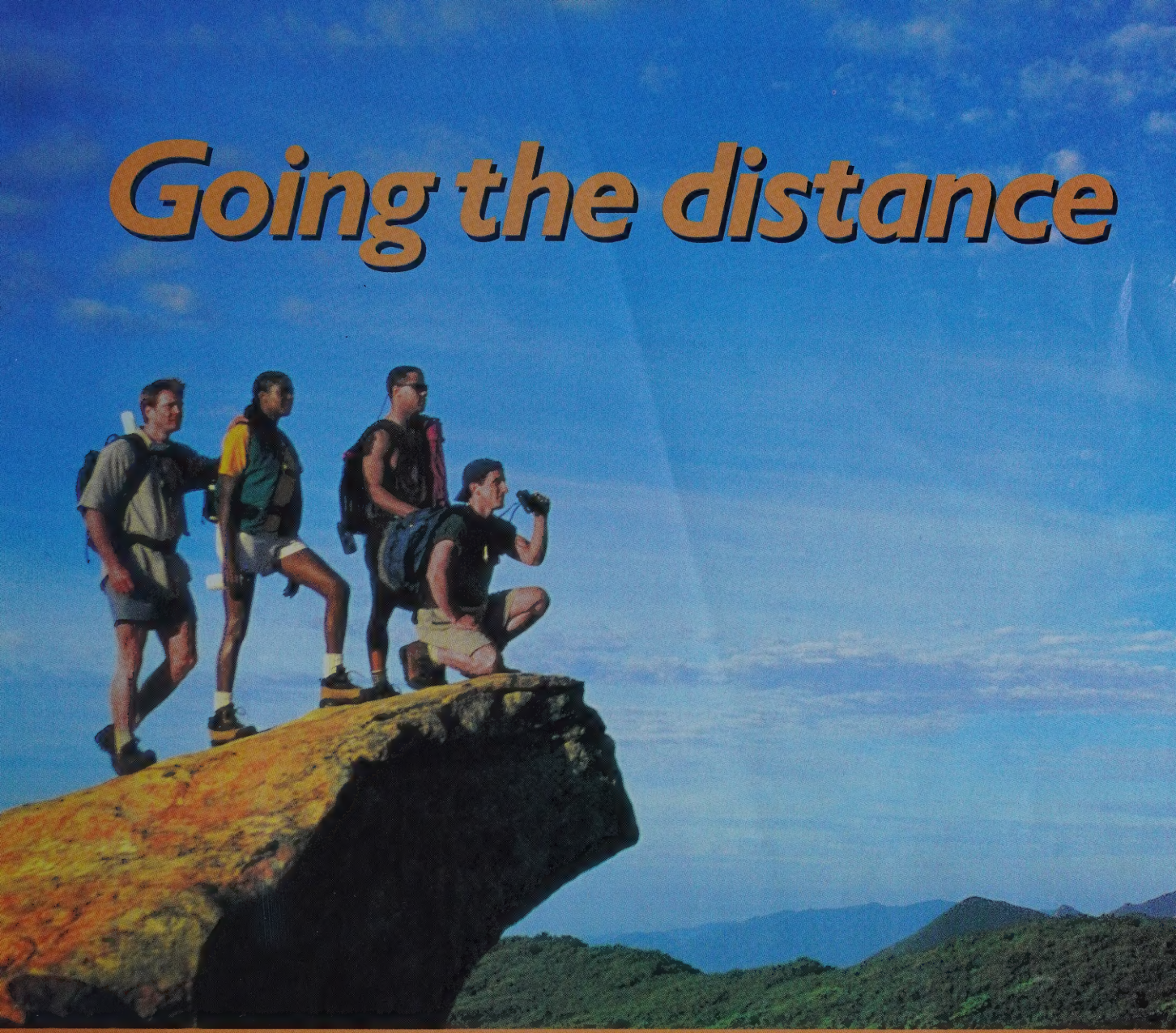
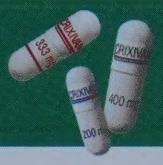
Going the distance



Remember to ask your doctor about CRIXIVAN.

www.crixivan.com

CRIXIVAN®
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules



CRIXIVAN®
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules

Patient Information about CRIXIVAN* (KRIK-sih-van)

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
Generic name: indinavir (in-DIH-nuh-veer) sulfate

9024510

Please read this information before you start taking CRIXIVAN. Also, read the leaflet each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss CRIXIVAN when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when using CRIXIVAN and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

What is CRIXIVAN?

CRIXIVAN is an oral capsule used for the treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). CRIXIVAN is a type of HIV drug called a protease (PRO-tee-ase) inhibitor.

How does CRIXIVAN work?

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

CRIXIVAN is usually prescribed with other anti-HIV drugs such as ZDV (also called AZT), 3TC, ddI, ddC, or d4T. CRIXIVAN works differently from these other anti-HIV drugs. Talk with your doctor about how you should take CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN has been studied in adults. The safety and effectiveness of CRIXIVAN in children and adolescents have not been established.

How should I take CRIXIVAN?

There are six important things you must do to help you benefit from CRIXIVAN:

1. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every day as prescribed by your doctor.** Continue taking CRIXIVAN unless your doctor tells you to stop. Take the exact amount of CRIXIVAN that your doctor tells you to take, right from the very start. To help make sure you will benefit from CRIXIVAN, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays". If you don't take CRIXIVAN as prescribed, the activity of CRIXIVAN may be reduced (due to resistance).
2. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every 8 hours around the clock, *every day.*** It may be easier to remember to take CRIXIVAN if you take it at the same time every day. If you have questions about when to take CRIXIVAN, your doctor or health care provider can help you decide what schedule works for you.
3. **If you miss a dose by more than 2 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.** However, if you miss a dose by less than 2 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of CRIXIVAN at any one time.
4. **Take CRIXIVAN with water.** You can also take CRIXIVAN with other beverages such as skim or non-fat milk, juice, coffee, or tea.
5. **Ideally, take each dose of CRIXIVAN without food but with water at least one hour before or two hours after a meal.** Or you can take CRIXIVAN with a light meal. Examples of light meals include:

   dry toast with jelly, juice, and coffee (with skim or non-fat milk and sugar if you want)
   corn flakes with skim or non-fat milk and sugar

   Do not take CRIXIVAN at the same time as any meals that are high in calories, fat, and protein (for example — a bacon and egg breakfast). When taken at the same time as CRIXIVAN, these foods can interfere with CRIXIVAN being absorbed into your bloodstream and may lessen its effect.
6. **It is critical that you drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquids (preferably water) throughout the day, every day. CRIXIVAN can cause kidney stones.** Having enough fluids in your body should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Does CRIXIVAN cure HIV or AIDS?

CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CRIXIVAN may still develop infections or other conditions associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. Although CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS, CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses, including death, associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

Does CRIXIVAN reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

CRIXIVAN has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take CRIXIVAN?

Do not take CRIXIVAN if you have had a serious allergic reaction to CRIXIVAN or any of its components.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while you are taking CRIXIVAN. We do not yet know how CRIXIVAN affects pregnant women or their developing babies.
- You are breast-feeding. You should stop breast-feeding if you are taking CRIXIVAN.

Also talk to your doctor if you have:

- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease caused by cirrhosis.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Diabetes
- Hemophilia
- High cholesterol and you are taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins".

Tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking or plan to take, including non-prescription medicines.

Can CRIXIVAN be taken with other medications?**

Drugs you should not take with CRIXIVAN:

SELDANE® (terfenadine)	HISMANAL® (astemizole)
VERSED® (midazolam)	HALCION® (triazolam)
PROPULSID® (cisapride)	Ergot medications (e.g., Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

Taking CRIXIVAN with the above medications could result in serious or life-threatening problems (such as irregular heartbeat or excessive sleepiness).

In addition, you should not take CRIXIVAN with rifampin, known as RIFADIN®, RIFAMATE®, RIFATER®, or RIMACTANE®.

Drugs you can take with CRIXIVAN include:

RETROVIR® (zidovudine, ZDV also called AZT)	EPIVIR™ (lamivudine, 3TC)
ZERIT® (stavudine, d4T)	isoniazid (INH)
BACTRIM®/SEPTRA® (trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole)	DIFLUCAN® (fluconazole)
BIAXIN® (clarithromycin)	ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35® (oral contraceptive)
TAGAMET® (cimetidine)	Methadone

VIDEX® (didanosine, ddI) — If you take CRIXIVAN with VIDEX®, take them at least one hour apart.

MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin) — If you take CRIXIVAN with MYCOBUTIN®, your doctor may adjust both the dose of MYCOBUTIN and the dose of CRIXIVAN.

NIZORAL® (ketoconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with NIZORAL®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

RESCRIPTOR® (delavirdine) — If you take CRIXIVAN with RESCRIPTOR®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

SPORANOX® (itraconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with SPORANOX®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

SUSTIVA™ (efavirenz) — If you take CRIXIVAN with SUSTIVA™, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

Talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of CRIXIVAN?

Like all prescription drugs, CRIXIVAN can cause side effects. The following is **not** a complete list of side effects reported with CRIXIVAN when taken either alone or with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN developed kidney stones. In some of these patients this led to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure or inflammation of the kidneys. Drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) each day should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had rapid breakdown of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia) which in some cases was severe or resulted in death.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had liver problems including liver failure and death. Some patients had other illnesses or were taking other drugs. It is uncertain if CRIXIVAN caused these liver problems.

Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors. In some of these patients, this led to ketoacidosis, a serious condition caused by poorly controlled blood sugar. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients required adjustments to their diabetes medication. Others needed new diabetes medication.

In some patients with hemophilia, increased bleeding has been reported.

Severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors, including CRIXIVAN, together with some of the cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins." Call your doctor if you develop severe muscle pain or weakness.

Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking protease inhibitors. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs and arms may also happen. The cause and long term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

Clinical Studies

Increases in bilirubin (one laboratory test of liver function) have been reported in approximately 10% of patients. Usually, this finding has not been associated with liver problems. However, on rare occasions, a person may develop yellowing of the skin and/or eyes.

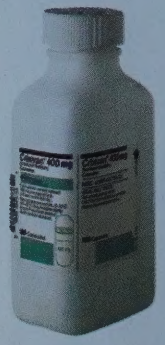
Side effects occurring in 2% or more of patients included: abdominal pain, fatigue or weakness, flank pain, feeling unwell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, acid regurgitation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, back pain, headache, trouble sleeping, dizziness, taste changes, rash, upper respiratory infection, dry skin, and sore throat.

Swollen kidneys due to blocked urine flow occurred rarely.

Marketing Experience

Other side effects reported since CRIXIVAN has been marketed include: allergic reactions; severe skin reactions; yellowing of the skin and/or eyes; heart problems including heart attack; abdominal swelling; indigestion; inflammation of the kidneys; inflammation of the pancreas; joint pain; depression; itching; hives; change in skin color; hair loss; ingrown toenails with or without infection; crystals in the urine; painful urination; and numbness of the mouth.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms. If the condition persists or worsens, seek medical attention.



How should I store CRIXIVAN capsules?

- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules in the bottle they came in and at room temperature (59°- 86°F).
- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules dry by leaving the small desiccant "pillow" in the bottle. Keep the bottle closed.

This medication was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep CRIXIVAN and all medicines out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

This leaflet provides a summary of information about CRIXIVAN. If you have any questions or concerns about either CRIXIVAN or HIV, talk to your doctor.

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Venus asks LaTonya Junior, one of the country's foremost experts on African American buying power, 'Is there a viable Black Gay and Lesbian market?' Story on page 32

New York executive and board member of Gay Men of African Descent, Marques McClary, climbs the corporate ladder while remaining true to his community. Story on page 18

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEALAN WILSON STUDIOS, MAKEUP BY DEANGELO OF NY

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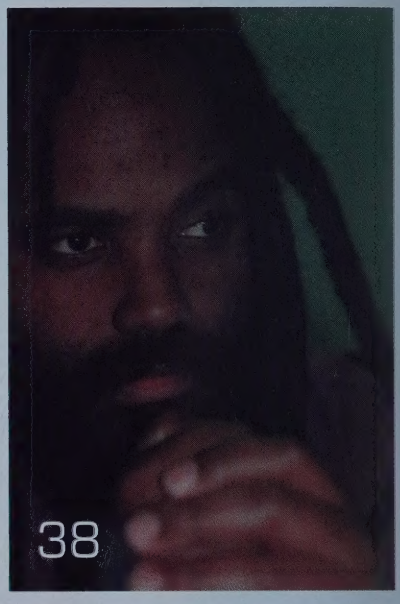

FEATURES **32 Media Giant, LaTonya Junoir** recognizes the vitality of the Black gay consumer market. **36 Black and Gay in Corporate America** Milton Simpson speaks to executives about career stategies. PEOPLE **14 Sweet Baby Jai'** making sweet melodies. **22 Maestro, Raymond Harvey,** conducts the Fresno symphony. **18 Breaking Corporate Borders Marcus McClary** balances work and community FASHION **35 Cool executive looks** IN EVERY ISSUE **10** Letters **20** Singles **54** SexTalk **55** Cosmic Rhythms **42** Books **74** BackChat **72** Millenium Calendar ON THE COVER LaTonya Junior, Photogrsaphy by De Alan Wilson Studios, Styling and Makeup by De Angelo of New York.

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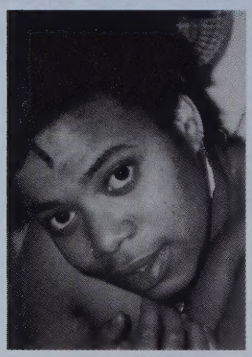
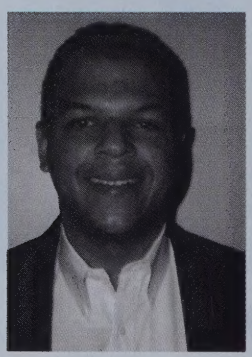
Carla Robinson is an aspiring screenwriter and a frequent magazine contributor living in New York City. Her love of the written word has drawn her down the editing path, which she finds challenging and exceedingly fulfilling. Her goal as an editor is to make each piece of writing as clear and engaging as it can be, while preserving the voice of the writer and the vision of the publication. She is pleased to say her experience as editor of this issue of *Venus* has been the most rewarding of her magazine career.



Kym-Kisha Nixon is the associate publisher for MetroSource magazine. One of her interests is writing poetry. She has participated in open mike forums at Barnes & Noble in New York City, Nuyorican Poets Cafe and, most recently, the now defunct Ossining Arts Council. She was born a hellraiser and found Harlem, New York to be an apt playground for exploration. Kym-Kisha now resides in Westchester, NY with her partner and their two children. She vibes on music, has a strong affinity with teenagers, the elderly ("old spirits are the wisest teachers"), writing, dancing and the Atlantic ocean! At present she is completing a Masters program at *Fordham University*.



Milton Simpson is not new to *Venus* pages. Author of *"Black and Gay in Corporate America* ",(Venus, December 1998), Milton has been a long-time fan and supporter of Venus Magazine. In 1995, his company, Forward Communications Inc., purchased one of the first full-page advertisements for *Venus*, and he regularly submits ideas and suggestions to the publisher. "I believe in what *Venus* is about and what it aims to achieve," writes the Atlanta local. "I enjoyed interviewing LaTanya Junior for this issue, and I hope readers are as impressed with her accomplishment as I am. Ms. Junior is dynamic, vibrant, and sits on the pulse of how corporate America and gay and lesbian communities work together."

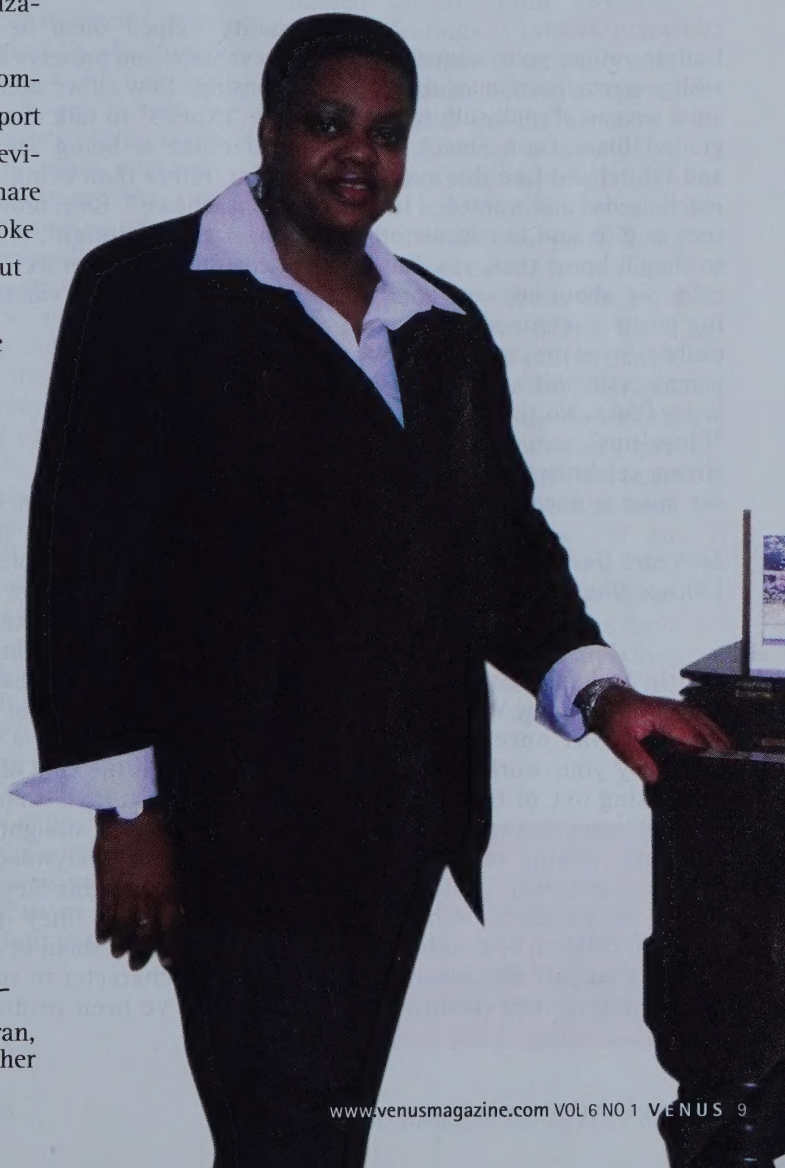
No Corporate Outing

I wish I could say that this issue was easy to pull together; in fact, it's been one of the most difficult. During our exploration of corporate environments, we found black gays and lesbians excelling at all levels and in every industry we researched. However, we could barely find a handful of folks willing to talk to *Venus* about their careers. We are neither surprised nor saddened by this fact. We believe that everyone is O.K. whereever they are in their journey to self actualization.

The challenges faced by black executives can be complicated by coming out on the job, however many report no such quandary. We asked several executives previously interviewed in last year's corporate issue to share their experiences since 'going public'. We also spoke with several successful 'out' black executives about their career goals and strategies.

Business consultant Milton Simpson asks the question, "Is there a viable black gay and lesbian market?" in his story, *Taking Care of Business.* We know the answer is yes, but many corporations are still considering the question. To find answers, Simpson turns to expert, LaTonya Junior. Director of media for a New York advertsing agency, Junior not only answers the question affirmatively, but also talks about the buying power of African Americans in general, cleverly insinuating that the 'ten percent' rule applies to blacks as well.

We may not have had the opportunity to interview as many of you [black gay folks in high level corporate or successful entrepreneurial positions] as we would have liked to, but we know you're out there and we know you're reading *Venus.* In fact, if you are reading this right now and you fit the profile you're in good company. The results of our online survey at www.venusmagazine.com, proves it.



Charlene Cothran,
Publisher

"When I picked up the issue with

actress Gretchen Palmer on the cover,

I was expecting an interview with an African American lesbian.

Imagine my surprise when I found out that

not only is Ms. Palmer straight, but she's promoting a movie.

This is the kind of crap I've come to expect

from white publications."

Educating Others

I salute you on your magazine and wish you much continued success. I am a woman of multicultural background (Black, Latin, French Creole, and White) and find this magazine much needed and wanted. I buy issues as gifts and to educate others so they'll know that, yes, folks of color are about business and having positive relationships. I especially enjoyed the article about what parents really think when their child is gay [Vol.5, No.3]. I also enjoy the "Close-ups" you do with mainstream celebrities. I would like to see more women in future issues.

Mercedes Guzman
Chicago Illinois

Affirm and Validate

I just picked up the Winter 1999 issue and was once again made happy by your work. Thanks for addressing one of the most challenging issues that we must face in our lives, talking to our parents about our sexuality. Thank you for letting the voices of both parents and their children be heard--particularly the parents' discussion of how acknowledging their children's sexuality helped them to reassess, reevaluate, and preserve their relationship. Now all we need is for all the "experts" to talk about sexual difference as being set, like eye color, rather than being some deviant "choice." Blue, brown, green, hazel...gay, straight, bisexual.... Keep up the good work! You continue to affirm and validate many.

Very Best,
bcdolmo@juno.com

A New Low

When I picked up the latest issue of your magazine with Gretchen Palmer on the cover [Vol.5, No.3], I was expecting to read an interview with an African-American lesbian or bisexual actor. Imagine my surprise when I found out that not only is Ms. Palmer straight, but she's promoting a movie about a sexual liaison. This is the kind of crap I've come to expect from white publications, both gay & straight. Usually they'll do some Hollywoodized fluff piece about straights they think are "cool," because they played a (stereotypical) lesbian or gay (usually gay) character in some lame movie. I've been reading *Venus*

Venus

FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN THE LIFE

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since '97, because it's one of the few queer magazines for Black people. It's bad enough that magazines like yours are rare, but when you start emulating tired white publications, I must take offense. I read all kinds of publications, but I expect Black magazines, especially queer ones, to do better than this. Hopefully, in the future you'll talk to real artists who don't pander to us for our dollars and go on about how many gay friends they have, but don't do a damn thing to help our community.
Respectfully yours,
Caz Prescott
Brooklyn, NY

Stunned

I thank you for printing the article, "Our son is Gay" (Vol.5, No.3) written by my mother about my coming out process. I was stunned to read how she reacted to me telling her. I never knew how she had reacted after she hung up the phone. Nevertheless, everything is excellent between me and my family. Now, I'm out and I can never go back. (Not that I ever wanted to.)

Sincerely,
LaRieko Welch

Giving Props

I would like to give props to your magazine. I feel real excitement each time I get my hands on your publication. I would like to piggy-back on the author who sent the letter "Too Many Men" [Letters, Vol.5, No.3]. I, too would like to see you cater to more women in the life. There are a lot of magazines out there that cater to women and gay men alike, but not particularly African-Americans. And that is what makes your magazine much more special, wonderful, and appreciated by myself and other sistas around the world. I would like to see more issues about everyday sistas with everyday issues, such as health, relationships, etc. Keepin' it real.

via the Internet

Unbreakable Bond

I would like to thank you for such an inspiring, moving article on BGLBT and their parents--who were willing to share their strength and feelings on how they came to terms with knowing their children's sexuality [Vol.5, No.3]. I have to be honest with you, as I began to read the story, I had mixed feelings such as anger and sadness because when I came out to my mother at 14, she turned on me. I am now 43 and my mother and I haven't had a relationship since then. It has taken years to come to terms with not having my mother in my life. Due to my loss, I started using mind altering substances until 1983, when I got sober. My mother still disowns me and my 15 year-old son, who has never met his grandmother. As I continued to read the article, so many ideas ran through my mind that could help my mother understand more about my life. But that was only wishful thinking. It wouldn't work, so I guess life goes on because I will not change who I am. At this point in my life, as long my son has accepted who I am that is all that matters. Unfortunately, the hope I once had died years ago. But I commend any parent willing to try to work through those issues and to see that it's most important that the relationship between parent and child continues to grow. I feel that the relationship that my son and I have is something so special that it will never grow apart. And that's important to me.

Sonya H.
Boston, MA

Opening Doors

I would like to thank you for publishing a much needed magazine for "People of African Descent in The Life." I have enjoyed it since its first issue but never got around to writing a letter. I enjoy everything about it, from the beautifully done photography on the cover to the gay related Alize ads on the back. The main reason I'm writing this letter is to congratulate you on the Publisher's Note written in the Winter 1999 issue ["A Letter to Our Parents"] with Gretchen Palmer on the front. It was a beautifully written article which summed up my (and probably others) feelings toward my parents in relation to sexuality and coming out issues. I made a copy of it and gave it to my mother who I had already came out to three years ago, but who still does not fully understand my choice. I must admit that after all these years, since she read that Publisher's Note, along with the articles, "Will the Circle be Unbroken?" and "Our Son is Gay," things seem to have gotten much better. Our communication lines seem to be opening up and she's even attempting to read gay literature. Words are a powerful force to be reckoned with and can be used for either good or bad. If an upright person knows how to use them they can open all kinds of doors. If a diabolical person knows how to use them they can deface and close all types of doors for many of us. Thanks for being an upright person.

Brandi Frederick
Trenton, New Jersey

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Marathon Racing: Can It Change Your Life?

An Interview with Ife George

by Lovonia Mallory

Every year there is some fitness craze that is supposed to change your life and give you better looking buns as well. All the Hollywood stars are usually doing it and often times it costs a small fortune. However, according to a 48 year-old sister from the Bronx, New York, marathon running is truly a life changing event! I met Ife George in Amsterdam at the 1998 Gay Games. She was traveling alone and all prepared for her marathon competition at the games. The temperature was extremly humid so she only competed in the half marathon, but she won a gold medal for her effort. Since then she has continued her training and recently finished the New York City Marathon last November. During our interview she was very casual about what the average person considers an extraordinary event. The marathon is a 26.2 mile run and the New York City Marathon is the largest in the world. The week after the race, Ife and I discussed how it felt to compete again.

Venus:Why did you decide to do the marathon?

Ife: This is my 12th New York City Marathon. In 1986, the New York City marathon was my 1st so I had to do it again. Running allows me to think about life. Girl, it changed my life completely!

V: In what way?

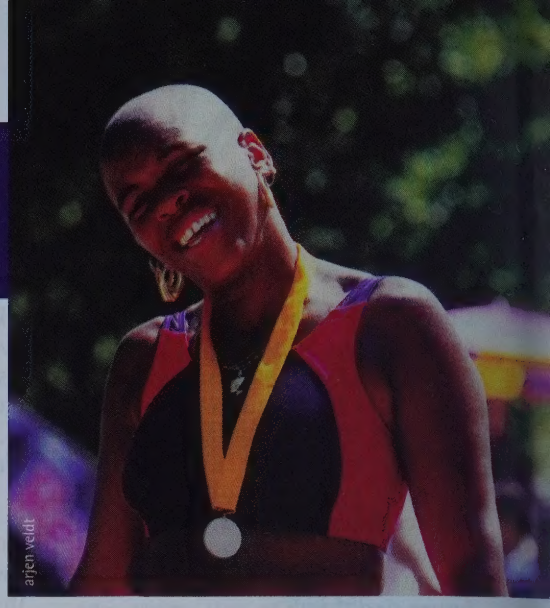
Ife: The first time I ran a marathon I remember crying at the finish line. It gave me such a sense of accomplishment. It was like, wow, if I keep running marathons, I can do just about anything. You know, I started running just after I broke up with my children's father. I felt isolated, depressed and I did not have a lot of self-esteem. But, when I started racing, it gave me a sense of discipline and purpose. During a long run, I would think about my life and constantly make decisions and changes. Girl I was stressed, especially being a single mother with two children to raise on my own. I was not very happy then, but I managed to love and care for my children despite my anxiety. My marriage was unhappy and it was not a very healthy relationship. However, when I started racing I felt so much power and control over my life. Distance running was such an eye opener and the right medicine I needed. I felt better about myself and it made me a better mother. My outlook on life became more positive and I developed more patience. Marathon training made me focused. I ate better, I started taking vitamins and I contined to fast and pray. I later became a Buddist in 1989 and that has helped me to develop my spiritual side.

V: But don't you still find it hard to keep training after all these years?

Ife: Hey girl I am 48 years old and I don't feel 48. Running keeps my body fit and praying keeps my spirit balanced. Sometimes when I go out young girls think I'm young also. It's great for the ego [laugh]. I am a grandmother but I dont have the body of a grandmother [big laugh]. Eating right, training, fasting, its a regimen, a way of life that keeps me feeling and looking young. I wouldn't trade it for anything."

V: Do you see very many sisters your age training?

Ife: Well, there are a few sisters racing, but the numbers are small compared to the thousands of people who race regularly in the New



York City races and the marathons.

V: Why do you think that is?

Ife: Black women have a lot of daily stress just to survive, and we tend to make excuses and put others ahead of ourselves. But I am here to tell you that running can help you deal with anything. All the stress of family, friends, jobs, just goes away and running clears the mind so you can come up with solutions to your problems. And a dose of spiritual focus can't hurt either!

V: How can someone get started?

Ife: I would start slow, running a mile or two. Once your body gets the hang of it you can add more mileage. When I train, I run 4 to 5 days a week. I run at least 5 miles a day at first and then I build up to 13 miles on the weekend. You really have to train sensibly, listening to your body. Start with a mile or two and build really slowly. You just have to keep at it. There are five keys to success: 1) feed your body well; 2) stay focused; 3) develop a spiritual discipline; 4) train every week and most importantly, 5) believe in yourself.

Lovonia Mallory is the owner of Female Fitness, a personal training studio in Albany New York, and president of a fitness consulting firm, Phemfit Inc. You may submit fitness questions to her at phemfit@aol.com.

INTERNATIONAL CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE ON AIDS AND DISABILITIES

September 4-7th, 2000

at the Sam Lords Castle, Barbados

Caribbean Rising *Mobilizing Health Care In The New Millennium.*

Conference Objective:
To provide an international forum in the Caribbean about HIV/AIDS and Disabilities, thereby initiating action to mobilize and improve the quality of health for all individuals.

Conference Tracks may include:
- *Behavioral, and clinical sciences*
- *Social sciences*
- *Policy and public health issues*
- *Programs, care management, and outreach.*
- *Religious instructions role in health management.*

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Glenda White, 91-10 214 Street, Queens Village, NY, 11428 **Tel/Fax** *718 468 4848* **E-Mail:** BarCare1@aol.com

POWERFUL AND
EASY TO LIVE WITH.

VIRACEPT IS POWERFUL It's tough on HIV. In many people, VIRACEPT lowered the amount of HIV in the blood to levels below the limit of detection of the test used, and substantially increased CD4 cell counts after 24 weeks of triple combination therapy. (The clinical significance of changes in viral RNA levels in blood has not been established. The virus may still be present in other organ systems.) **VIRACEPT IS EASY TO LIVE WITH** Take it three times a day with your normal meals or light snacks. **VIRACEPT IS GENERALLY WELL TOLERATED** People treated with VIRACEPT may experience some side effects; the most common is diarrhea of moderate or greater intensity in 20% of people in clinical trials. **VIRACEPT WORKS** It's indicated for the treatment of HIV infection when anti-HIV drug therapy is warranted. It is not yet known whether taking VIRACEPT will help you live

WHAT YOUR **PROTEASE INHIBITOR** CAN BE:

longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that can occur with HIV. Some common medications and some HIV related medications should not be taken with VIRACEPT. For some people, protease inhibitors have been associated with the onset or worsening of diabetes mellitus and hyperglycemia, and with increased bleeding in patients with hemophilia. Ask your doctor. For more information, call toll free **1-888-VIRACEPT** or visit **www.agouron.com**. (Refer to the important information on the next page.)

VIRACEPT
nelfinavir mesylate

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A Warner-Lambert Company

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VIRACEPT®
nelfinavir mesylate

Information for Patients About VIRACEPT® (VI-ra-cept)
Generic Name: nelfinavir (nel-FIN-na-veer) mesylate

For the Treatment of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infection

Please read this information carefully before taking VIRACEPT. Also, please read this leaflet each time you renew the prescription, just in case anything has changed. This is a summary and not a replacement for a careful discussion with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss VIRACEPT when you start taking this medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when taking VIRACEPT and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

WHAT IS VIRACEPT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

VIRACEPT is used in the treatment of people with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. Infection with HIV leads to the destruction of CD4 T cells, which are important to the immune system. After a large number of CD4 cells have been destroyed, the infected person develops acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

VIRACEPT works by blocking HIV protease (a protein-cutting enzyme), which is required for HIV to multiply. VIRACEPT has been shown to significantly reduce the amount of HIV in the blood. You should be aware, however, that the effect of VIRACEPT on HIV in the blood has not been correlated with long-term health benefits. Patients who took VIRACEPT also had significant increases in their CD4 cell count.

VIRACEPT is usually taken together with other antiretroviral drugs such as Retrovir® (zidovudine, AZT), Epivir® (lamivudine, 3TC), or Zerit® (stavudine, d4T). Taking VIRACEPT in combination with other antiretroviral drugs reduces the amount of HIV in the body (viral load) and raises CD4 counts.

VIRACEPT may be taken by adults, adolescents, and children 2 years of age or older. Studies in infants younger than 2 years of age are now taking place.

DOES VIRACEPT CURE HIV OR AIDS?

VIRACEPT is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of VIRACEPT are not known at this time. People taking VIRACEPT may still develop opportunistic infections or other conditions associated with HIV infection. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections, and Kaposi's sarcoma.

It is not known whether VIRACEPT will help you live longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that may occur.

There is no proof that VIRACEPT can reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

WHO SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT TAKE VIRACEPT?

Together with your doctor, you need to decide whether VIRACEPT is appropriate for you. In making your decision, the following should be considered:

Allergies: If you have had a serious allergic reaction to VIRACEPT, you must not take VIRACEPT. You should also inform your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist of any known allergies to substances such as other medicines, foods, preservatives, or dyes.

If you are pregnant: The effects of VIRACEPT on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

If you are breast-feeding: You should discuss with your doctor the best way to feed your baby. You should be aware that if your baby does not already have HIV, there is a chance that it can be transmitted through breast-feeding. **Women should not breast-feed if they have HIV.**

Children: VIRACEPT is available for the treatment of children 2 through 13 years of age with HIV. There is a powder form of VIRACEPT that can be mixed with milk, baby formula, or foods like pudding. Instructions on how to take VIRACEPT powder can be found in a later section that discusses how VIRACEPT Oral Powder should be prepared.

If you have liver disease: VIRACEPT has not been studied in people with liver disease. If you have liver disease, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

Other medical problems: Certain medical problems may affect the use of VIRACEPT. Some people taking protease inhibitors have developed new or more serious diabetes or high blood sugar. Some people with hemophilia have had increased bleeding. It is not known whether the protease inhibitors caused these problems. Be sure to tell your doctor if you have hemophilia types A and B, diabetes mellitus, or an increase in thirst and/or frequent urination.

CAN VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS?

VIRACEPT may interact with other drugs, including those you take without a prescription. You must discuss with your doctor any drugs that you are taking or are planning to take before you take VIRACEPT.

Drugs you should not take with VIRACEPT:

- Seldane® (terfenadine, for allergies)
- Hismanal® (astemizole, for allergies)
- Propulsid® (cisapride, for heartburn)
- Cordarone® (amiodarone, for irregular heartbeat)
- Quinidine (for irregular heartbeat), also known as Quinaglute®, Cardioquin®, Quinidex®, and others
- Ergot derivatives (Cafergot® and others, for migraine headache)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Versed® (midazolam)

  Taking the above drugs with VIRACEPT may cause serious and/or life-threatening adverse events.
- Rifampin (for tuberculosis), also known as Rimactane®, Rifadin®, Rifater®, or Rifamate®

  This drug reduces blood levels of VIRACEPT.

Dose reduction required if you take VIRACEPT with:

Mycobutin® (rifabutin, for MAC); you will need to take a lower dose of Mycobutin.

A change of therapy should be considered if you are taking VIRACEPT with:

- Phenobarbital
- Phenytoin (Dilantin® and others)
- Carbamazepine (Tegretol® and others)

  These agents may reduce the amount of VIRACEPT in your blood and make it less effective.
- Oral contraceptives ("the pill")

  If you are taking the pill to prevent pregnancy, you should use a different type of contraception since VIRACEPT may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER ANTI-HIV DRUGS?

Taking VIRACEPT together with other anti-HIV drugs increases their ability to fight the virus. It also reduces the opportunity for resistant viruses to grow. Based on your history of taking other anti-HIV medicine, your doctor will direct you on how to take VIRACEPT and other anti-HIV medicines. These drugs should be taken in a certain order or at specific times. This will depend on how many times a day each medicine should be taken. It will also depend on whether it should be taken with or without food.

Nucleoside analogues: No drug interaction problems were seen when VIRACEPT was given with:

- Retrovir (zidovudine, AZT)
- Epivir (lamivudine, 3TC)
- Zerit (stavudine, d4T)
- Videx® (didanosine, ddI)

If you are taking both Videx (ddI) and VIRACEPT: Videx should be taken without food, on an empty stomach. Therefore, you should take VIRACEPT with food one hour after or more than two hours before you take Videx.

Nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs):

When VIRACEPT is taken together with:

- Viramune® (nevirapine)

  The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be reduced. Studies are now taking place to learn about the safety of combining VIRACEPT with Viramune.
- Other NNRTIs

  VIRACEPT has not been studied with other NNRTIs.

Other protease inhibitors:

When VIRACEPT is taken together with:

- Crixivan® (indinavir)

  The amount of both drugs in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.
- Norvir™ (ritonavir)

  The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.
- Invirase® (saquinavir)

  The amount of saquinavir in your blood may be increased. If used in combination with saquinavir hard gelatin capsules at 600 mg three times daily, no dose adjustments are needed. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIRACEPT?

Like all medicines, VIRACEPT can cause side effects. Most of the side effects experienced with VIRACEPT have been mild to moderate. Diarrhea is the most common side effect in people taking VIRACEPT, and most adult patients had at least mild diarrhea at some point during treatment. In clinical studies, about 20% of patients receiving VIRACEPT 750 mg (three tablets) three times daily had four or more loose stools a day. In most cases, diarrhea can be controlled using antidiarrheal medicines, such as Imodium® A-D (loperamide) and others, which are available without a prescription.

Other side effects that occurred in 2% or more of patients receiving VIRACEPT include abdominal pain, asthenia, nausea, flatulence, and rash.

There were other side effects noted in clinical studies that occurred in less than 2% of patients receiving VIRACEPT. However, these side effects may have been due to other drugs that patients were taking or to the illness itself. Except for diarrhea, there were not many differences in side effects in patients who took VIRACEPT along with other drugs compared with those who took only the other drugs. For a complete list of side effects, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD I TAKE VIRACEPT?

VIRACEPT is available only with your doctor's prescription. The light blue VIRACEPT Tablets should be taken three times a day. VIRACEPT should always be taken with a meal or a light snack. You do **not** have to take VIRACEPT exactly every 8 hours. Instead, you can take it at normal times when you are eating.

Take VIRACEPT exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not increase or decrease any dose or the number of doses per day. Also, take this medicine for the exact period of time that your doctor has instructed. **Do not stop taking VIRACEPT without first consulting with your doctor, even if you are feeling better.**

Only take medicine that has been prescribed specifically for you. Do not give VIRACEPT to others or take medicine prescribed for someone else.

The dosing of VIRACEPT may be different for you than for other patients. **Follow the directions from your doctor, exactly as written on the label.** The amount of VIRACEPT in the blood should remain somewhat consistent over time. Missing doses will cause the concentration of VIRACEPT to decrease; therefore, **you should not miss any doses.** However, if you miss a dose, you should take the dose as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose and future doses as originally scheduled.

Dosing in adults (including children 14 years of age and older)

The recommended adult dose of VIRACEPT is 750 mg (three tablets) taken three times a day. Each dose should be taken with a meal or light snack.

Dosing in children 2 through 13 years of age

The VIRACEPT dose in children depends on their weight. The recommended dose is 20 to 30 mg/kg (or 9 to 14 mg/pound) per dose, taken three times daily with a meal or light snack. This can be administered either in tablet form or, in children unable to take tablets, as VIRACEPT Oral Powder.

Dose instructions will be provided by the child's doctor. The dose will be given three times daily using the measuring scoop provided, a measuring teaspoon, or one or more tablets depending on the weight and age of the child. The amount of oral powder or tablets to be given to a child is described in the chart below.

Pediatric Dose to Be Administered Three Times Daily

Body Weight Kg	Body Weight Lb	Number of Level Scoops*	Number of Level Teaspoons†	Number of Tablets
7 to < 8.5	15.5 to <18.5	4	1	-
8.5 to <10.5	18.5 to <23	5	1¼	-
10.5 to <12	23 to <26.5	6	1½	-
12 to <14	26.5 to <31	7	1¾	-
14 to <16	31 to <35	8	2	-
16 to <18	35 to <39.5	9	2¼	-
18 to <23	39.5 to <50.5	10	2½	2
≥23	≥50.5	15	3¾	3

In measuring oral powder, the scoop or teaspoon should be level.

* 1 level scoop contains 50 mg of VIRACEPT. Use only the scoop provided with your VIRACEPT bottle.

† 1 level teaspoon contains 200 mg of VIRACEPT. Note: **A measuring teaspoon used for dispensing medication** should be used for measuring VIRACEPT Oral Powder. Ask your pharmacist to make sure you have a medication dispensing teaspoon.

How should VIRACEPT Oral Powder be prepared?

The oral powder may be mixed with a small amount of water, milk, formula, soy formula, soy milk, dietary supplements, or dairy foods such as pudding or ice cream. Once mixed, the entire amount must be taken to obtain the full dose.

Do **not** mix the powder with any acidic food or juice, such as orange or grapefruit juice, apple juice, or apple sauce, because this may create a bitter taste.

Once the powder is mixed, it may be stored at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 6 hours. Do **not** heat the mixed dose once it has been prepared.

Do **not** add water to bottles of oral powder.

VIRACEPT powder is supplied with a scoop for measuring. For help in determining the exact dose of powder for your child, please ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

VIRACEPT Oral Powder contains aspartame, a low-calorie sweetener, and therefore should not be taken by children with phenylketonuria (PKU).

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE STORED?

Keep VIRACEPT and all other medicines out of the reach of children. Keep bottle closed and store at room temperature (between 59°F and 86°F) away from sources of moisture such as a sink or other damp place. Heat and moisture may reduce the effectiveness of VIRACEPT.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. Be sure that if you throw any medicine away, it is out of the reach of children.

Discuss all questions about your health with your doctor. If you have questions about VIRACEPT or any other medication you are taking, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. You can also call 1.888.VIRACEPT (1.888.847.2237) toll free.

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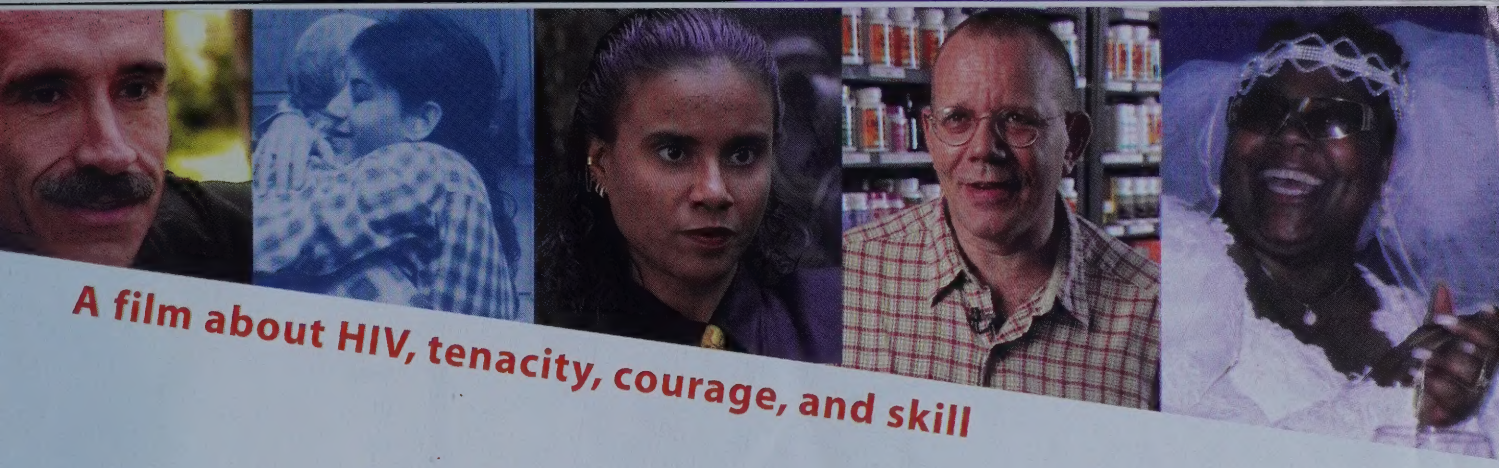


A film about HIV, tenacity, courage, and skill

Wide Time:
An HIV Odyssey

*"**Wide Time** is just what the doctor ordered: Both inspirational and practical, it weaves a beautiful tapestry from the survival stories of the heroes who've taken control of their lives."*

—Bob Lederer, Editor, POZ Partner

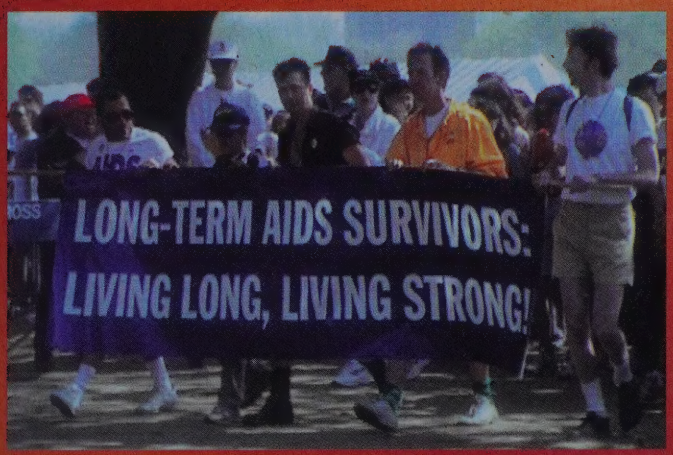
Learn the key strategies of long-term AIDS survivors from a **highly acclaimed new film.**

Call **1-800-343-5540** to order your VHS copy of *Wide Time* today!

For more information about the film and upcoming screenings, please visit out website at **www.widetime.com**.

Available in a continuous, 55-minute version for large screenings or a three-part version for support groups, workshops, caregiver meetings, and classroom use.
Includes closed captioning and a detailed discussion guide.

***Free** to correctional facilities through a grant from Agouron Pharmaceuticals.*
Fax request on letterhead to (201) 864-5327, 9:00 am–6:00 pm EST.



Show *Wide Time: An HIV Odyssey* to:

Explore treatment questions, build skills, and inspire people with HIV disease, cancer or other illnesses;

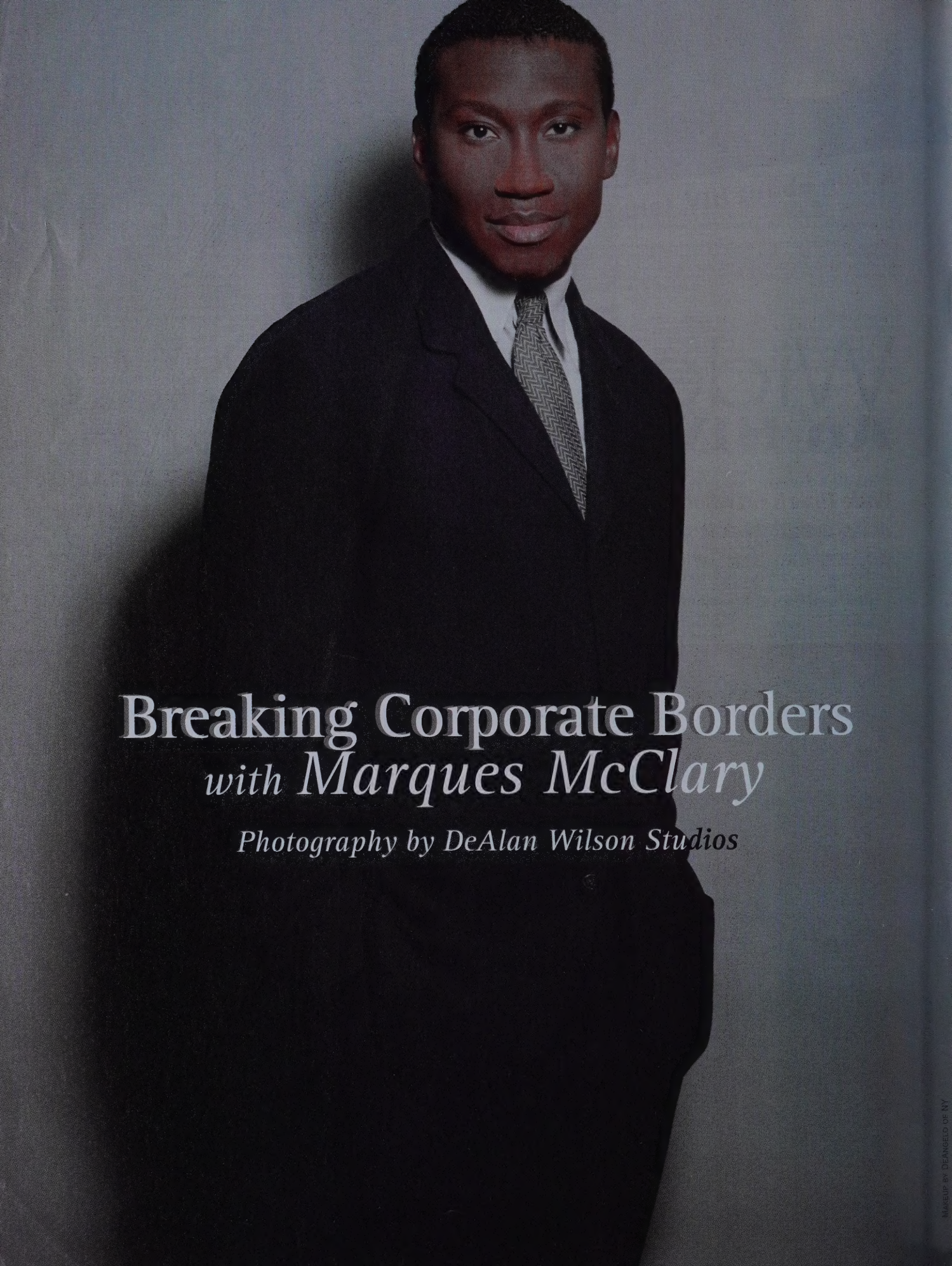
Orient people who have recently tested positive or been diagnosed with AIDS;

Train caregivers and nursing and medical school students;

Educate college and high school students and share safer sex information with them.

Premiered at the 1999 U.S. Conference on AIDS, Denver, CO.

Independently produced by Wide Time Productions. Wide Time: An HIV Odyssey was funded by unrestricted educational grants from Serono Laboratories, Roxane Laboratories, New York State Council for the Arts Media Program, Agouron Pharmaceuticals, Stadtlanders Pharmacy, the Paul Robeson Fund, the Donnet Fund, the Tony Cox Fund, the Robert I. Wishnick Foundation, and in-kind and cash donations from over 350 individuals and 80 businesses.



Breaking Corporate Borders

with Marques McClary

Photography by DeAlan Wilson Studios

MAKEUP BY DEANGELO OF NY

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"Even if you don't want to become Madison Avenue's proverbial Man in the Grey Flannel Suit, if you're in advertising or PR, at some point in your career you want to be where public relations is at its battiest, biggest and best--and that's New York, New York!"

Marques McClary, a Troy, New York native, remained in the chill of upstate New York until he was 19, when he headed south to matriculate at Howard University.

That was in 1987, after Howard had gone through its "color" revolution. "I remember that light and dark thing when growing up," the 30 year, old McClary said, himself on the darker side of things. Howard, however, had not gone through its sexual revolution and McClary was one of the students on hand to help move that revolution along.

"When I was at Howard, we revived the lesbian-gay organization on campus. Being able to come out in that community at school was helpful," Marques told *Venus*. It gave him a confidence that emboldened him both in his personal life and in his public relations' career.

McClary is a board member of GMAD (Gay Men of African Descent). "I majored in English with the idea of going to law school," McClary explained, "but ended up in public relations. My first boss was a black woman and I was really impressed with her. It was the first time I worked with someone who had power. She, Parri Grace Smith, was a very effective leader. My relationship with female supervisors have been much different [more positive] than my relationship with males." After an internship with the Federal Communication Commission, employment with a WIC lobbying group, and various part-time jobs in offices of public affairs and media where, among other things, he edited monthly newsletters, McClary began looking for a full-time position.

He found one with Porter Novelli, a public relations firm in Washington, D. C., where he started as an account assistant and after five months became an assistant account executive with a support group. The position entailed writing press releases and developing media lists. McClary stayed there for two-and-a-half years before heading for The Big Apple.

Even if you don't want to become Madison Avenue's proverbial Man in the Gray Flannel Suit, if you're in advertising or PR, at some point in your career you want to be where public relations is at its battiest, biggest and best--and that's New York, New York!

"I've always wanted to live in New York City," McClary said. His reasons having as much to do with family as career. "My sister and I were really close," he confided, "and I wanted to be closer to them so that I could watch--and help--my nephew in his growing up."

When the opportunity came, McClary left Washington for New York City, hoping to learn the ropes and grow with the company. He wanted a job with a small firm. However, he began working for a corporation larger than he wished and, as with many of our personal relationships, it didn't work out. "I never really felt comfortable," McClary said. He left the company and found employment at Ketchum, a full-service agency and brand consumer where he is responsible for day to day PR activities for various clients, generally pharmaceutical. It's a match and he loves it.

Although he is a relative newcomer to the business, McClary has already discovered that corporations are more concerned about the bottom line than about race and sex. Does this mean that McClary has been spared racism and homophobia in American corporations? "Please! Keep it real." According to McClary, how you fare in terms of homophobia depends on what area of public relations you are in. Companies dealing with entertainment may be more tolerant of gays than those dealing with banks and insurance companies.

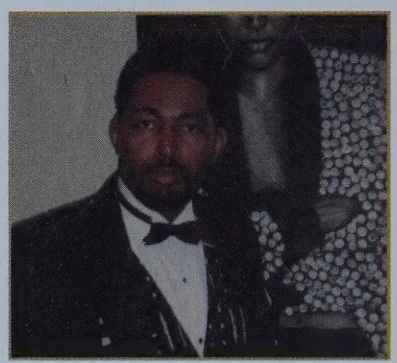
"Advertising and PR firms are leaders in this area, first and foremost they see you as black," McClary said. "When they've viewed me as gay, it made no difference. I have encountered more issues being black than my being gay."

Marques McClary is up for promotion and ultimately would like to do more work in international public relations. From his experience he knows that sailing across the Atlantic or Pacific, or simply dashing over our northern or southern borders, depend on his expertise, his skill at satisfying his clients, and the necessity of keeping his personal life personal. That's a good prescription for us all. McClary has his prerequisites in order. *Venus* looks forward to a future interview with him "over there" in some exotic place.

Phil Petrie

Single, Gifted & Black!

If you're Single, Intelligent, and Out and would like to be feature here on our Bachelors/Bachelorettes page, send your photo along with a short bio and answers to the following: How would you describe a romantic date? What are the ingredients to a successful relationship? If we select your entry, you'll receive a free subscription to Venus!



Dale Madison, 41
Los Angeles, California

A recent Los Angeles transplant, Dale is an out and proud gay man who works in the film industry as a costumer and actor. In his spare time, he speaks out on topics such as racism, homophobia, and AIDS awareness.

His ideal mate is a confident brotha around his own age who is comfortable being a gay man. "No pretense, no closets in my home." Dale has a clear vision of what he wants in a man, "I like a man who can kiss spontaneously and have just as much fun watching a romantic movie in bed or dancing and screaming till dawn. I like a man who can talk honestly and openly about sex, including fantasies and past encounters. I like a man who is comfortable with a bit of a beer belly, (cause I love beer). I like a man with pretty feet, cause I love to give foot massages."

Dale doesn't subscribe to the notion of there being specific ingredients for a successful relationship.

"Maybe I have not found one yet to base those facts upon," he muses. "I do believe in faith and I believe there is a thing called chemistry. If within that chemistry two men learn to share, laugh, cry, talk, and give room for respect and emotional support, success could be around the corner. I believe we learn and grow from each past relationship and faith in ourselves will bring love to our lives."

Brandi E. Frederick, 22
Trenton, New Jersey

A project coordinator for Foster Care, Brandi is a college sophomore majoring in Liberal Arts. Brandi's hobbies include reading, working out, shopping, dancing, cafe life, and, once she gets one, spending time with her partner. She seeks someone who is honest, sweet, out, and confident in her role "rather butch, fem, aggressive, etc." Brandi wants a woman with a spiritual understanding who likes to have fun but knows when to be serious. She would also like her partner to be hardworking and to understand that education is paramount and that one can't get enough of it. And, that one of the best educators is life itself.

Brandi's idea of a romantic date is walking in the park or a candle lite dinner in a restaurant with sultry music playing.

"I like to get a good understanding of the person, her likes and dislikes, and then I try to plan time and dates around our common interests and some of her personal interests," says Brandi.

Brandi believes the necessary steps in building a successful relationship are understanding, willingness to sacrifice (whether it be emotionally, economically, socially, etc.), communication, becoming friends first and being comfortable when she and her lady are "together and out and about." She goes on to say, "it is equally important to stay friends after the romantic relationship has evolved." Brandi says that she's learned the importance of being able to admit when she is wrong and being able to say, 'I'm sorry!'

Visit our website at www.venusmagazine.com if you'd like to reach Dale or Brandi by email.

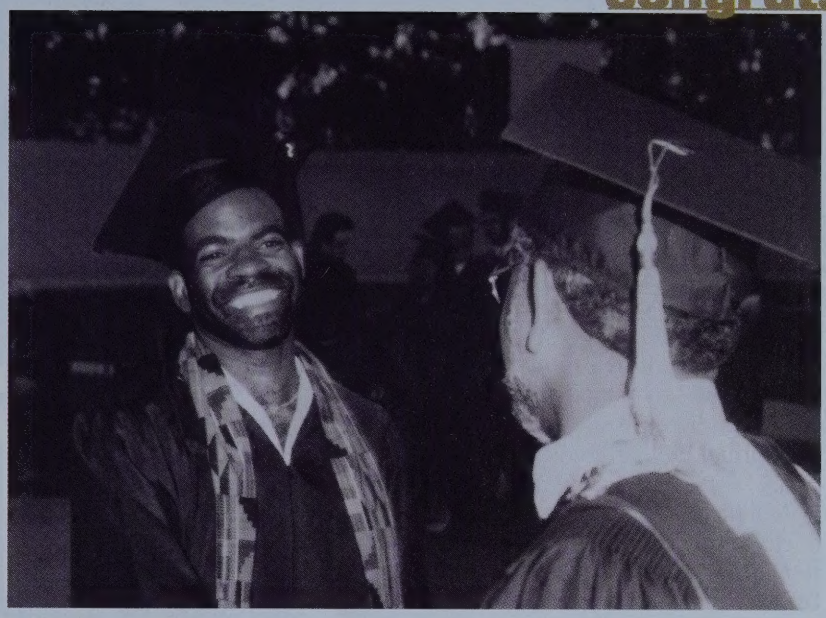
Healthy Love

5 Steps to A Fulfilling Relationship

Most couples are missing the key ingredient to healthy relationships, says author Dan Klatt. People can beat the odds and develop lasting romances by attaching no conditions to the love they give. His new book, *Experience Unconditional Love This Year*, teaches people how to make all their relationships more healthy and fulfilling.

"People have become so fearful and alienated from each other that they really hold back on the amount of love they give," he said. "Even with someone you want to get intimate with, you're scared that your love will be rejected or not returned, so you often don't take the risk. Sure, then your heart doesn't break, but it's still empty. How often has that happened to you?" *Experience Unconditional Love This Year* shows people how to express feelings for a love interest without attachment, so that if the person doesn't notice or return the affection, the sender will be able to remain heart-centered and happy. Here's The Unconditional Love Checklist:

1. Release the emotional blocks from your childhood and past relationships.
2. Realize that life's challenges are great opportunities to learn and grow.
3. Forgive yourself.
4. Let go of fear and take back control of your life.
5. Start loving yourself, and the love will start flowing freely through you.



Andre Bolla

Adult Star Earns Degree

In an industry where most people assume that wages are those spent on sin, one adult film star used his paychecks to purchase a college education. After 25 years and attendance at four different universities, 10 different colleges and numerous trade schools, Andre Bolla earned a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies from California State University, Dominguez Hills. Bolla, 42, has been an adult model and actor for almost 15 years appearing in dozens of magazines and over 80 films. He has also appeared in 42 mainstream motion pictures and television programs.

Deborah Thurston Elected as Chair

was elected for the first time in its 11-year history, At The Beach Shorey, Inc., will be led by a woman. At its most recent board meeting, the orginization elected Deborah Thurston president of Shorey, Inc. for a two-year term. She succeeds Duane Bremond, one of the founders of the organization.

Operating as At the Beach, Shorey, Inc. produces the At the Beach Unity Celebration held each year in Malibu, California, on Independence Day weekend. Last year more than 11,000 women and men, primarily from the African American lesbian and gay community, attended the four-day event.

A UCLA graduate with a B.A. in sociology, Thurston is a sales representative for a medical and pharmaceutical company. She is also associated with Black Artists Network Development which provides career opportunities for black people in theater, film and the performing arts.

Maestro *Raymond Harvey* Making Music Is More Than Shaping Notes

Consistently winning critical praise, Raymond Harvey, music director of the Fresno [California] Philharmonic, has been called "one of a welcome new breed of American-born and -trained conductors currently enriching our national musical scene." Unlike Dean Dixon, an African American conductor who emigrated to Europe in order to work on the podium, Harvey,- also an African American, has been the conductor of several American orchestras.

The 1999-2000 season of the Fresno Philharmonic marks Harvey's seventh year as music director, a post he assumed after an eight-year tenure with the Springfield Symphony in Massachusetts. Harvey is also the music director of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra and the El Paso Opera. Things have changed in the world of classical music since Dixon's era and an African American on the podium is no longer a big-news item, but are part of a very small club Henry Lewis conducted the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and James DePriest, currently the dean of African American conductors, heads the Oregon Symphony. Paul Freeman conducts the Chicago Sinfonietta.

Maestro Harvey is in a maelstrom, his fans believes, because of his lifestyle--his avowed gayness. Harvey, 48, moved to Fresno with his longtime partner in 1993, becoming at once a hero to the gay community. Tickets and attendance increased during Harvey's tenure. The orchestra became a jewel in the city's cultural crown. *The Fresno Bee*, claimed that "Under the direction of charismatic conductor Raymond Harvey, the Fresno Philharmonic has positioned itself as the Valley's cultural crown jewel."

Trouble arrived in the valley like a late Spring storm when the philharmonic board voted last May 24 not to extend Harvey's contract,when it expired in June 2000. With that move, in the parlance of today's youth, "it was on." The city's cultural mavens took sides The orchestra placed itself in the Harvey camp as did the gay community who saw Harvey's lifestyle as reason for his dismissal. There were whispers that his race even played a part. Things were getting ugly.

Those persons feeling that the Fresno Philharmonic, which had once almost been bankrupt, needed fiscal restraints', sided with the newly elected board. Besides, Harvey, in the board's opinion, wasn't cooperating with it. Robert Lippert, the board's executive director, claimed that Harvey wasn't a team player. Not a team player! Whether you're gay or straight, black or white, that's verboten to any corporation. The board charged Harvey with insubordination and said that posts he held at Kalamazoo and El Paso overextended him. At a special election held in late November, to replace the good with Harvey advocates failed to do that.

In addressing the homophobic charge, Lippert said that the board knew Harvey was gay when it hired him. A former board member weighed in with a letter to the editor in the December 22 issue of *The Fresno Bee*: "The most casual observer must know that the board that elected not to renew his contract is composed of substantially the same men and women who initially hired him or who, thereafter, renewed his contract. The members of the board, of which I was one, who hired him and later renewed his contract were all aware of Mr. Harvey's race and lifestyle, and none of them ever so much as whispered, discussed or, for that matter, even considered those factors as issues."

In the corporate world, you play its game or you lose by default. In Fresno, Raymond Harvey, a native of New York, found that to be a harsh reality. No one had questioned his work. The orchestra applauded him. Still, his final concerts with the Fresno Philharmonic will be given this May.

"I'm already working with the Kalamazoo Orchestra," Harvey told *Venus*. "I love conducting opera and will travel between Kalamazoo and El Paso. Michael and I have been together for 18 years and this is the first time that we've decided not to live in the city in which I work. We're discussing our next move now."

Shed no tears for Harvey. He is an excellent pianist and accomplished choral conductor, holds Master's and Bachelor's degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and a Master's and Doctorate from the Yale School of Music. For the last 15 years he has been music director or conductor for two symphony orchestras.

"This is still an art form that comes from a European tradition," Harvey said. "Many of the people who make decisions are not used to being inclusive. Although this has started to change, things tend to be unspoken and subtle. You never know why you're not chosen for some things. You have to work a little bit harder to be taken seriously, and you have to be sensitive to other people's problems."

Phil Petrie

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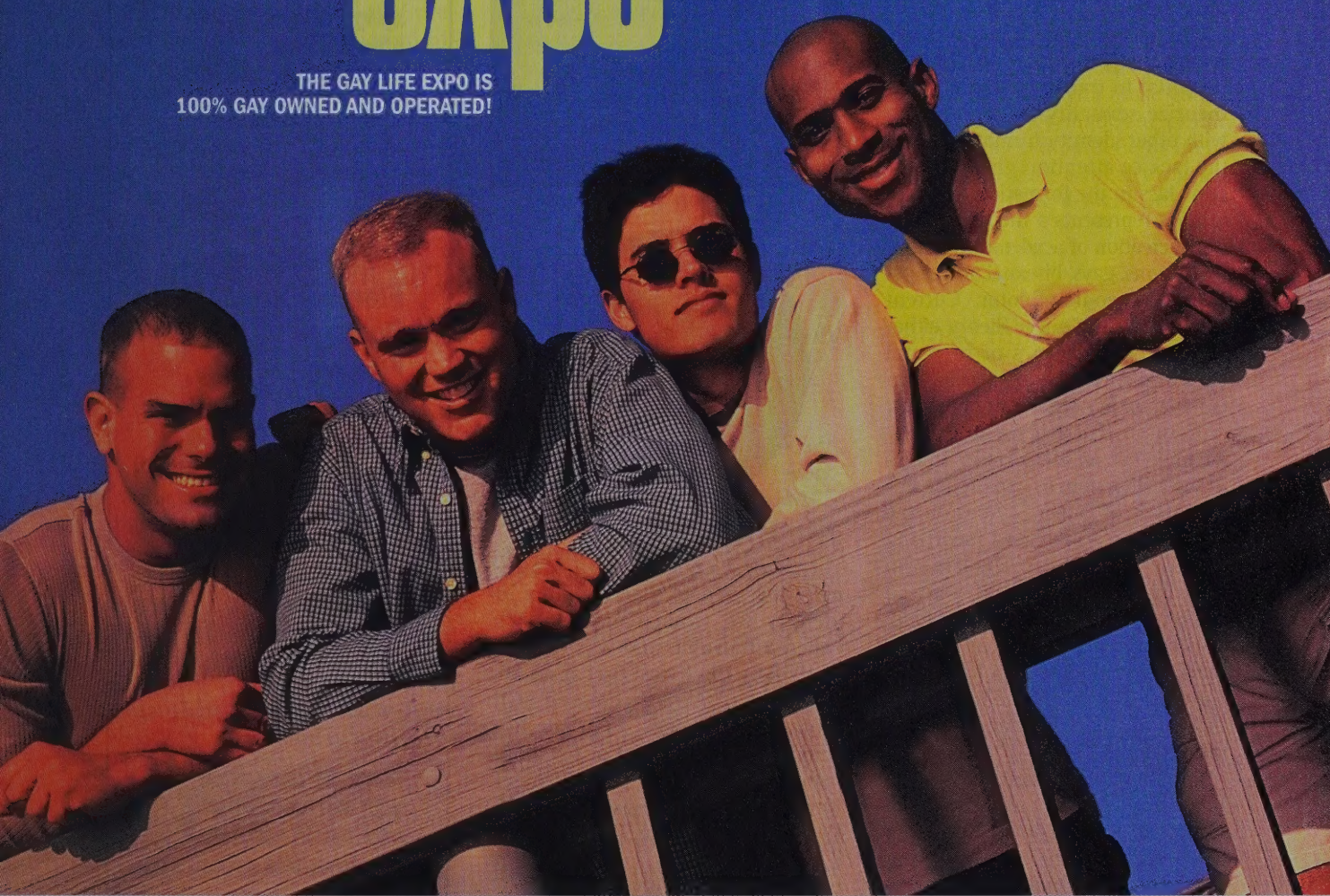

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Black Queer Studies

Queer Studies has gained momentum in academia and claims its space as a legitimate disciplinary subject. The University of California–Berkeley, UCLA, New York University, and Duke University are institutions that provide regular course offerings in Queer Studies, offered by faculty who teach in this area full-time. That the academia is beginning to take this research seriously is witnessed by the growing number of tenure-track positions that relate to Queer Studies, but also by courses, critical anthologies, journals and conferences devoted to queerness.

Given its currency in the academic marketplace, Queer Studies has the potential to transform the way we theorize sexuality in conjunction with other identity formations. Yet the lack of attention given to race and class in the formation of Queer Studies represents a theoretical gap in the creation of academic discourse on lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgendered people of color. Current formulations of queer theory either ignore the categories of race and class or theorize their effects in "discursive" rather than material terms.

To suture that gap, we are hosting a conference on Black Queer Studies in the Millennium to explore the implications of Queer Studies on the pedagogy, research, and theorizing of African-American scholars who identify as queer and/or who do teaching and research in this field. This conference will focus on how black queer theorists, in particular, can critically intervene in the formation of Queer Studies as a disciplinary project.

For more information, please contact E. Patrick Johnson at ejohn29@aol.com or 919-962-4944 or visit our website at www.unc.edu/~epjohnso.bqs.html.

Corrections:

The name of Mrs. Lucy Bellinger, mother of activist George Bellinger, was misspelled in Vol. 5 No.3, in the article "What Black Parents Really Think When They Find Out Their Child is Gay." The article also incorrectly stated that all parents in the story had been divorced. George's parents had never been divorced.

Poetic Healing

Bisexual women and lesbians of color submit healing poetry mainly about abuse, biphobia, breast cancer, chemical dependency, HIV/AIDS, lesbianphobia, racism and sexism. A poetry health video and a self-help treasure are being compiled. Send a maximum of 3 original and unpublished poems by May 1, 2000 to Chinwe Odeluga at: 1941 Gaston Place Drive #328, Austin, Texas 78723 or chinweodeluga@hotmail.com

The BAWABU

The Same-Gender-Loving-Movement has created a new symbol to identify SGL women and men. It's called a Bawabu, and was created in 1998 by Olu Kwasi Osei as an affirmation of Afrika-centered SGL brothers and sisters. For permission to use the symbol or for more information, write to Project Bawabu, c/o Olu Kwasi Osei, 1195 Kensington Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90019-1710, or e-mail bawabu@netnoir.net.

The Blackstripe, www.blackstripe.com your web address for information and news for and about same-gender-loving, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people of African descent. Features the Blacklist, a listing of notable sgl/lgbt people of African descent. www.blackstripe.com/blacklist

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Alvan Quamina: National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum *New Director*

Last November, the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum chose Alvan Quamina, 37, as its executive director--the third for the organization. According to Quamina, the leadership forum began in 1988 as a Los Angeles organization. It provided leadership training, information, networking opportunities and as a by-product, social opportunities. The group held an annual conference. The membership boasted few individuals who were not Angelinos

The leadership forum also had its AIDS Prevention Team which provided (and provides) HIV prevention training for gay and bisexual men as well as treatment, education, training and supportive services consistent with a holistic concept. Ancillary issues such as housing and transportation were also confronted.

finance sat high among them threatening to crush the organization. Quamina told *Venus* "the leadership forum, has had financial problems for a long time. It receives funds from membership assessments, conference registration, and a few small grants. When it did not have a director, I offered my services to the board on a volunteer basis and they accepted my offer."

Why? Is Quamina a glutton for punishment, or a wealthy bon vivant acting with magnanimity?

"It's certainly not the latter," Quamina laughed, then continued on a more serious note. "I am a technician, a trouble shooter and love fixing things. I'm a corporate lawyer [the University of California, Berkeley] trained in business. I think that I'm the best person for the job. I've run a couple of non-profits in the past."

One of these non-profit organizations was AMASSI in Oakland, Calif. When Quamina began working there in February 1996, AMASSI had a budget of under $400,000, an annual deficit of $80,000, and five employees. When he left four years later, it had a budget of $2.2 million, no deficit, and 36 employees.

"That's an analytic way of looking at it," Quamina offered. "Some of the more important things couldn't be measured in those terms. For example, when I first went there, the air was filled with antagonism and fights between staff members were possible. When I left, people loved each other."

Eventually, Quamina, a Yale undergraduate, wants to delve into business ventures for himself. "I left Yale and attended UC Berkeley and went into a large law firm. Law comes easily to me, but it is business that is my passion."

Now, however, it is working with the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum and trying to ameliorate the AIDS problem working with the AIDS Prevention Team within the leadership forum. According to Quamina, the AIDS Prevention Team attempted to spin off from the leadership forum and become an independent entity.

"They had a litany of reasons for doing that," Quamina said, "and felt that the remedy was for them to spin off. I met with those young men before they made the public bid and was sympathetic to them. In the long run, a local program may need to be a local program and not one piece of a national organization.

"But, I also felt that the AIDS Prevention Team was not ready for the spin off. The problems at that local program level are more significant than at the corporate level. We are going through an audit of that program now."

Quamina has his work cut out for him. If his endeavors in the past are examples, we look forward to a financially stabalized leadership forum.

Phil Petrie

"I am a technician, a trouble shooter.

and love fixing things, I'm a corporate lawyer trained in business.

I think that I'm the best person for the job."

Will People of Color *Pay the Price?*

A Statement by People of Color in Support of the Ad Hoc Committee for an Open Process

NABWMT REJECTS CALL FOR MILLENNIUM MARCH ON WASHINGTON; CITES HISTORY OF EXCLUSION OF PEOPLE OF COLOR FROM PROCESS

The National Association Of Black and White Men Together (NABWMT), at the most recent meeting of the board of directors, voted unanimously not to endorse the Millennium March on Washington scheduled to take place the last weekend in April.

This action was taken after extensive discussions regarding the genesis, development, and leadership surrounding this event. From the initial exclusion of all but the two largest LGBT organizations in announcing this event, through continued top-down direction of its development, it has become apparent that people of color have not been part of the process.

To further emphasize our distaste for the above event, the NABWMT Board of Directors has moved our Spring meeting in Washington, D.C. from the same weekend as the Millennium March to a date two weeks earlier.

Black gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered members of the Ad Hoc Committee for an Open Process and other BLGBT were the first protesters to object to the planning involved for the Millennium March on Washington (MMOW) scheduled on April 29th. The Ad Hoc Committee denounced the way mainstream lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered movement demanded that BGLBT groups neglect their race, sex, and class in order to carry out MMOW's narrow agenda.

As people of color, we have no one at the leadership table to represent us. At the 1998 meeting, five white people decided to "march" on Washington.

There were no people of color and no young GLBT persons present. This disregard for the interests of two major segments of our community was not only indefensible, but prohibited a much needed social, economic, and political change. When we raised our concerns, the white-led organizations, exerting their influence in the national LGBT movement, moved ahead anyway with planning the march. They claimed that the march was a done deal since money had already been spent on it.

In an effort to silence our criticisms, they put people of color on MMOW's board of directors. This gesture raised a new set of problems: The forces that affect us as people of color are structural and mere reform will not address them. Putting black people on a board of directors whose organization lacks democracy is simply putting a Band-Aid over an infected sore. There are political differences among us, and it is not wise to assume that by simply being black, one is automatically acting in the best interest of other black people.

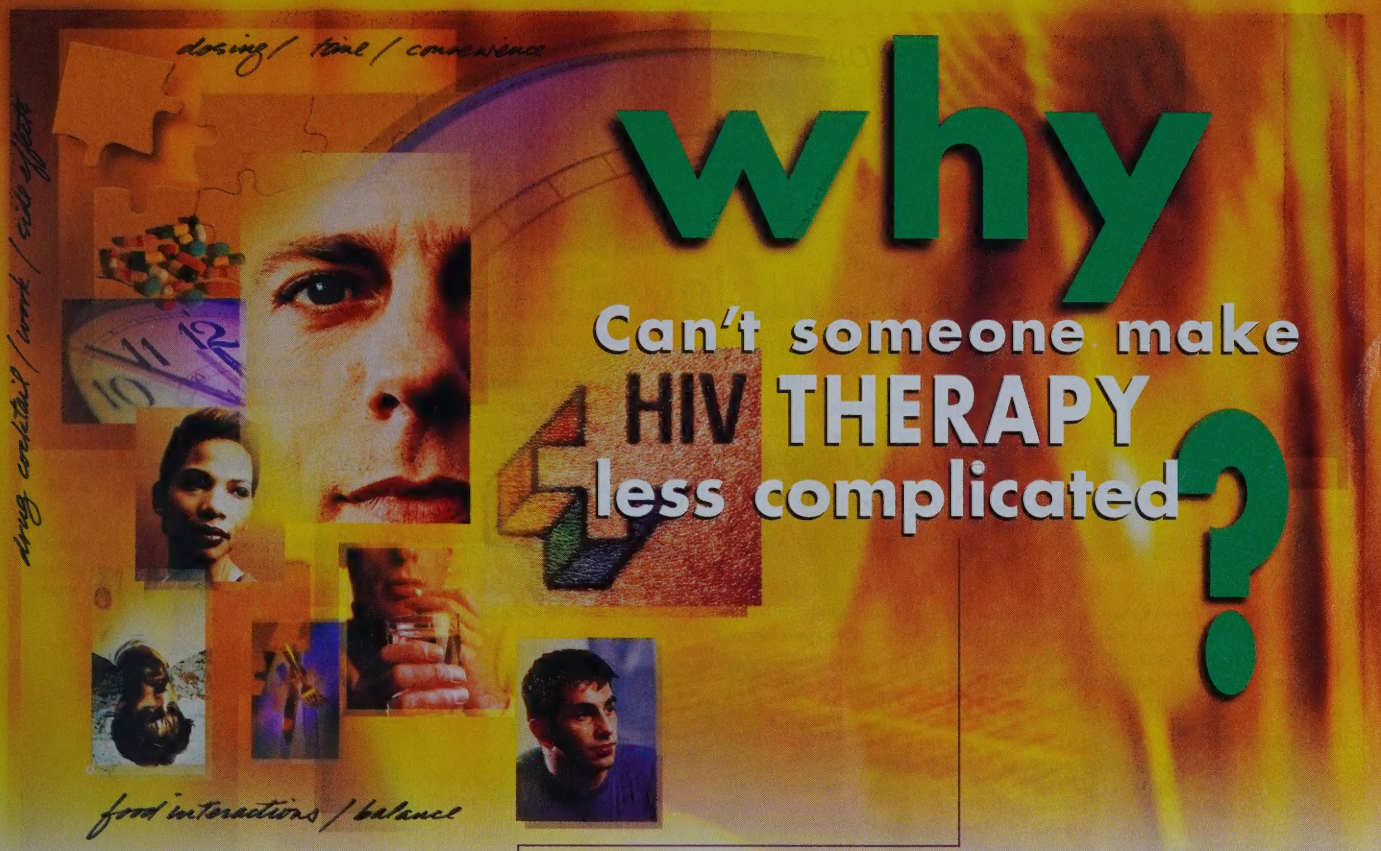
The fact is that no efficient channel of accountability exists on the national level. The national organizations we have created to be our "faces and voices" have made no efforts to act on our behalf.

On its web site the MMOW presents its target population to potential sponsors as the "affluent and loyal gay/lesbian market." Evidently, the MMOW is banking on the "affluent" predominately white male elements of our community. What will a 99.9 percent white audience on the mall in DC achieve for us as black lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered participants?

White-led gay organizations have not addressed issues of dire concern to black LGBTST. These issues cannot be separated from those the mainstream movement incorrectly presents as specific to homosexuality. We must simultaneously devote our time and energy to fight those homosexual battles and also fight against police brutality, racial violence, violence against women, environmental destruction, and for reproductive freedom and economic justice.

The MMOW debacle has forced us to examine the direction of our movement. As people of color we have always raised crucial questions concerning the processes and assumptions that conspire to silence us and to make us invisible. Any issue concerning oppression, domination, or exploitation is an altogether "queer" issue. Our liberation cannot be won without that simple recognition.

We call on the LGBTST community as a whole to join us in our call for an open process within the LGBTST community. We also invite LGBTST people of color to continue working towards our own self-sufficient and multi-issued LGBTST movement and community.



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SUSTIVA is tough on HIV. It reduces the amount of virus in your blood and increases the number of CD4 cells. SUSTIVA can even be used in young children, 3 years of age or older. This is based on results from controlled clinical trials at 24 weeks. Presently, there are no results from controlled clinical trials showing the long-term effects of SUSTIVA.

Now listed among preferred anti-HIV regimens in government guidelines.[1]

SUSTIVA has manageable side effects. Most side effects are mild to moderate and can be managed. The most significant side effects associated with SUSTIVA therapy have been nervous system symptoms (dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating and/or abnormal dreams) and rash. These usually subside within the first two to four weeks of treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. Taking SUSTIVA at bedtime may help make nervous system symptoms less noticeable.

Pregnancy should be avoided in women receiving SUSTIVA because birth defects have been seen in primates dosed with SUSTIVA. Barrier contraception should always be used in combination with other methods of contraception.

Talk to your doctor when you start taking SUSTIVA. SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Always tell your doctor if you are taking, starting or changing any prescription or non-prescription medicine when taking SUSTIVA. Your doctor may change your medicines or change their dose. You should discuss your prior medical conditions (such as mental illness, substance abuse, hepatitis, etc.) with your doctor before taking SUSTIVA.

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1. Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in HIV-Infected Adults and Adolescents. Panel on Clinical Practices for Treatment of HIV infection, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), May 1999.

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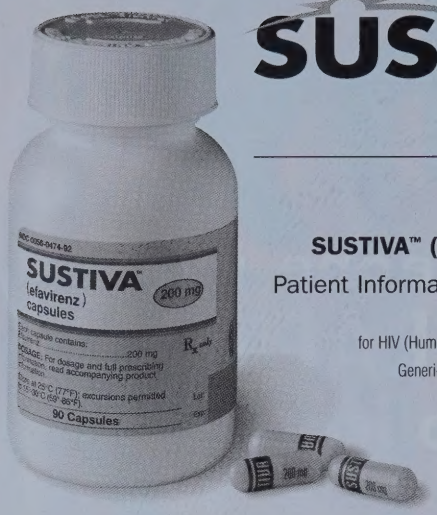

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Please read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA. Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. Don't treat this leaflet as your only source of information about SUSTIVA. Always discuss SUSTIVA with your doctor when you start taking your medicine and at every visit. You should remain under a doctor's care when using SUSTIVA. You should not change or stop treatment without first talking to your doctor.

What is SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is a medicine used to help treat HIV, the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

How does SUSTIVA work?

SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (called "viral load"). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells (a type of immune cell in blood). SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

Does SUSTIVA cure HIV or AIDS?

SUSTIVA is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important that you remain under the care of your doctor.

Does SUSTIVA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

How should I take SUSTIVA?

- The dose of SUSTIVA for adults is 600 mg (three 200 mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).
- Take SUSTIVA at the same time each day. You should take SUSTIVA at bedtime during the first few weeks or if you have side effects, such as dizziness or trouble concentrating (see **What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**).
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water, juice, milk or soda. You may take SUSTIVA with or without meals; however, SUSTIVA should not be taken with a high fat meal.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away. If you do miss a dose, do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.

Can children take SUSTIVA?

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

Who should not take SUSTIVA?

Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to SUSTIVA or any of its ingredients.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor right away if you:

- Are pregnant or want to become pregnant
- Are breast-feeding
- Have problems with your liver, or have had hepatitis
- Start or change any medicine
- Have side effects while taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz)
- Have a history of mental illness, substance or alcohol abuse

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting treatment with SUSTIVA. These feelings may be less noticeable if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime. They also tend to go away after you've taken the medicine for a few weeks. Rarely, patients have more serious side effects that may affect mood or ability to think clearly. These side effects occur more often in patients with a history of mental illness or substance abuse. Tell your doctor promptly if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. There is the possibility that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs. You should avoid driving or operating machinery if you are having these side effects.

One of the most common side effects is rash. These rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor promptly.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea. However, this is not a complete list of side effects reported with SUSTIVA when taken with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss a more complete list of side effects with you.

Please contact your doctor immediately before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects. Tell your doctor or other healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

What about birth control, pregnancy, or breast-feeding?

Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA. Birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. You should use a condom or diaphragm in addition to other methods of birth control while taking SUSTIVA. Inform your doctor immediately if you are pregnant. If you want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor. Do not take SUSTIVA if you are breast-feeding. Talk to your doctor if you are breast-feeding your baby.

Can I take other medicines with SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Your doctor may change your medicines or change their doses. For this reason, it is very important to:

- Let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- Tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your medicines when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA:**

- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

The following medicines may need to be changed or have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA:**

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Fortovase® (saquinavir)
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin)

How should I keep SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is available as 50 mg, 100 mg, and 200 mg capsules.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59°-86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

How can I learn more about SUSTIVA?

Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider if you have questions about either SUSTIVA or HIV. For additional information you can visit the SUSTIVA website at http://www.sustiva.com.

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

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DuPont Pharmaceuticals
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Tale of A City Cleveland, Ohio is *on Fire*

by Lincoln Pettaway

"Brother2Brother is a program in the Cleveland area that works in conjunction with the Aids TaskForce of Greater Cleveland. The Brother2Brother program collaborates with both **BlackOut and Brother Circle and also creates programs for both lesbian and gay people of color.** This year they produced the first Black Gay Film Festival that Cleveland has ever seen.

Aron Myers, president of Cleveland's BROTHERS CIRCLE greets invited guests to their first annual wine sip.

When you think of Cleveland Ohio, you might think of the Cleveland Indians' recent defeat by the New York Yankees. If you are a little older, Cleveland might stir up images of a river of fire (the Cuyahoga River, which runs through Cleveland, actually caught on fire during the late '70s). But if you look closely, you might see that the water is not the only thing on fire.

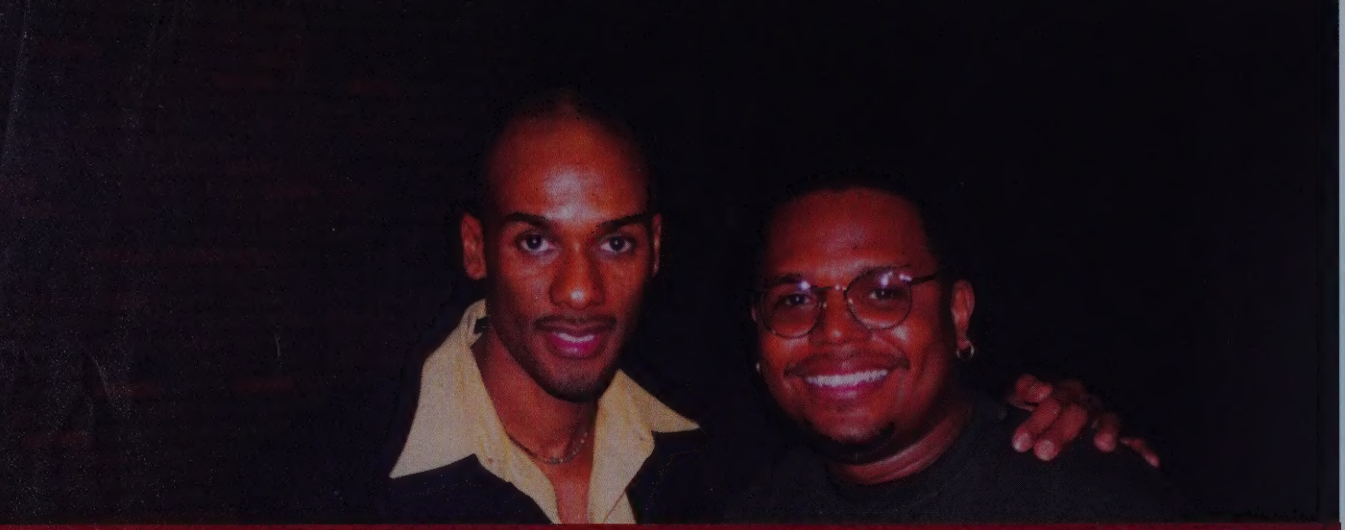
Over the past few years, Cleveland has been developing a strong black gay community. Cleveland is a Midwestern town through and through, but the black gay community has had the opportunity in the '90s to realize how its collective efforts can affect even the most conservative establishments.

In the past, small social clubs were created that included networks of professionals from every walk of life. Like fraternal orders, many of these groups tended to meet privately. This was the norm for the lesbian and gay community in Cleveland for years. However, a new generation of professional black lesbian and gay men is stepping up to the plate and creating new opportunities for African American lesbians, gay, bisexual and transgendered people to come together.

Brother Circle is one of the groups doing this type of work. Founded by Marcus Lowe in 1995, the Brother Circle of Cleveland was created to provide a safe space for gay African American men to come together and share the challenges and experiences they encounter because of their sexual and racial identity. Since its inception, the Brother Circle has been restructured on numerous occasions, but one thing has remained a constant: The Brother Circle of Greater Cleveland has consistently worked to create a space where African American lesbians and gay men can come together and celebrate their rich heritage.

Recently, author/activist Keith Boykin, appeared in Cleveland at the Brother Circle's First Annual Wine Sip. Boykin spoke about love to his audience. The focus of his discussion centered on self-esteem. "Love is a really simple topic, but actually, it's kind of complicated at the same time. So few of us ever really understand [it] or take the time to try and figure out what love is all about," explained Boykin.

Boykin framed his discussion on the little bits of Cleveland he had seen that day. He was only in the city for a few hours before he spoke, but he managed to compile an impressive amount of information dur-



Author, Keith Boykin, (l), and Larry Webb of Cleveland's BLACKOUT Productions. Below, Walter Lundy, treasurer of Brothers Circle.

ing his brief stay. He mentioned how he remembered the city's Public Square from his work with the Dukakis campaign in 1988.

In October, the Brother Circle sponsored author Michangelo Scruggs' book signing for his first novel, *The Men's Room* (see review). Scruggs is the newest member of Ishai Books, a publishing company dedicated to promoting the work of lesbian and gay African-American writers. Scruggs, a St. Louis native who moved to Cleveland to attend medical school, targeted male rape in his first book.

"It's not autobiographical. I have never been raped, but I have had many friends and many loved ones who have shared with me their rape experience and how it dictates every day and every hour and every minute of their lives. And when they call me at two or three o'clock in the morning, it starts to make you think, what could you do for other victims of rape who don't have anyone to share this with?"

The Brother Circle holds annual retreats, benefits, book signings and other monthly events. The Brother Circle of Cleveland also works with BlackOut, another local black gay organization that produces a large conference each year.

BlackOut was founded by Larry Webb and Derek Barnett four years ago. This event began as nothing more than a fabulous idea that has grown into a nationally recognized and respected weekend celebration. The talented list of speakers who have been brought in over the years is astonishing. This list is highlighted by such notables as Karen Williams, nationally known African American lesbian comedienne; Janet Black, former lesbian rights program director for the National Organization of Women; and author James Earl Hardy. BlackOut does more than just this annual event. Its latest effort has been to develop a project called Club 1722.

Club 1722 is a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and deciding-teen group, which creates a safe space for young people to discuss their sexuality. With only a three month history, Club 1722 is off to a promising start. Club 1722 has bimonthly meetings and is in the process of developing other services that are wanted and needed by the younger people currently attending on a regular basis. Webb, one of the founders of club 1722, says he wants youths to take a leadership role in Club 1722. He sees the club as a place for them to not only discuss their issues, but also to be encouraged to pursue goals. Webb also hopes that 1722 will nurture the self-esteem and self-worth of its members.

Brother2Brother is a program in the Cleveland area that works in conjunction with the AIDS TaskForce of Greater Cleveland. The Brother2Brother program collaborates with both BlackOut and Brothers Circle and also creates programs for lesbian and gay people of color. This year, the organization produced the first Black Gay Film Festival that Cleveland has seen. It is currently planning a roundtable discussion on the topic of AIDS in Literature. Most of the panel members will be writers and poets from the Cleveland area.

These are only a few of the headliners in the Cleveland area, but don't take my word for it--come and see for yourself. For more information about these and other programs in the Cleveland area, call the AIDS TaskForce of Greater Cleveland at (216) 621-0766 and ask for the Brother2Brother program.

ONE Step Further

By Carla Robinson and Steven Fullwood

Moved to aid in the healing of their community, Steven G. Fullwood, Heru Khuti, and Eric Thomas, Jr., came together to form ONE Step Further (OSF) last year. The name they chose for their ambitious undertaking illustrates the philosophy behind it--they want to push sexual education and advocacy of non-heterosexual people to the next level. Once they arrive at that next level, they don't intend to get cozy, but, instead, to assess their achievements and burst their own envelope in the name of "sexual emancipation" for lesbians, gays, and bisexuals of black and Latino descent.

The New York-based group has plans to travel the country giving seminars and presentations, providing services, and distributing products that help people discuss, learn about, and experience sexual health. OSF says its aim is provocative, thought-provoking, sensual, and healing. "When you look at many of the groups in our community, their services often take a curative approach, they provide counseling and such after the fact. OSF takes a preventive, proactive stand. We want to talk about HIV before it strikes," said Fullwood.

Fullwood is no stranger to opening dialogue on topics of interest to OSF's target audience. He is a prolific writer, librarian, humorist and "spiritual warrior." For the past ten years, he has created African and Afro-diasporic programming for children and adults. He has conducted workshops at various conferences throughout the US. Fullwood's written words have appeared in STANDARDS: An International Journal of Multicultural Studies, and he currently contributes to a number of publications, including Venus Magazine.

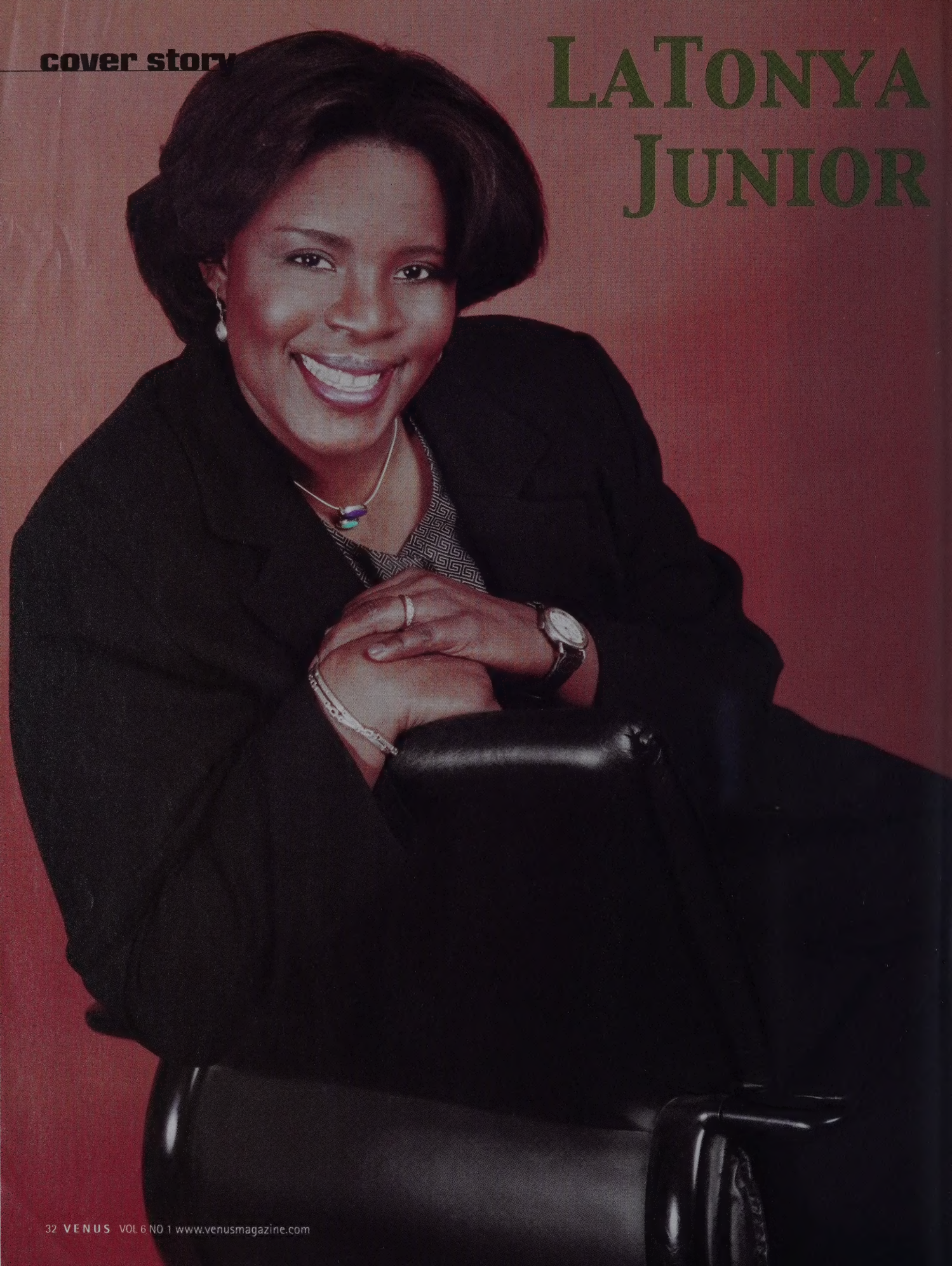
Khuti is an African priest, writer, and social systems consultant who is deeply committed to "social justice and self-actualization for every member of the human race." His background in psychology, workshop design, and peaceable learning environments has aptly prepared him for work with OSF. His enthusiasm for OSF is contagious. When discussing how a person might benefit from one of its workshops, he said, "We know how to create great experiences. When people come to an OSF event, they know they will laugh, learn, and create in ways they may never have before. They literally use parts of themselves they tend to overlook, deny, reject, or repress."

After attending myriad seminars and workshops targeted toward BGLB, Fullwood and Khuti, two friends who share an entrepreneurial spirit and a burning desire to make a difference, saw that a place was needed for, as Fullwood said, "brothers and sisters to engage their own issues in a loving, safe environment." Khuti added that in forming OSF, he and Fullwood sought to create "an opportunity for people to be more of themselves without the overcast of disease, illness, or dysfunction. OSF not only believes but demonstrates that we really are wonderful." The two enlisted Thomas, a marketing ace who works in arts administration, to help them create and fine-tune services that will be of value to their community, and to get the word out to the people OSF can help most.

The results, so far, have been inspiring. The group is prepared to present several of its newly minted workshops at DC Black Pride 2000. In the past, OSF has held workshops at New York City's Black Pride '99, Gay Men of African Descent's (GMAD) 2nd Annual Conference, and several of GMAD's Friday Night Forums.

To find out more about ONE Step Further, e-mail the organization at onestepfurther1@yahoo.com.

LaTonya Junior



Taking Care of BUSINESS!

This Savvy, Sassy and Seasoned executive urges consumers to use their clout.

by Milton Simpson

Director of Media for Stedman Graham and Partners, LaTonya Junior is gung ho on minorities using their dollars to get a fair share of the proverbial piece of he pie. She seemed destined for this task even as a child when at an early age, LaTonya Junior's father included his children in his business dealings, which, as Junior said, "gave me a firsthand opportunity to learn the ins and outs of contract negotiations, fee arrangements, business development, and other essential business lessons." Apparently, these lessons stuck because Junior now shines in her role as vice president of media services for Stedman Graham & Partners, a New York-based, full-service advertising agency.

In her position, Junior works with Fortune 500 corporations, government agencies and non-profit institutions to develop strategic targeting media plans. Throughout the years, she has developed international and ethnic-targeted campaigns for some of the world's premier consumer marketing companies, including, among many others, AT&T, Chase Bank, Coca-Cola, Greyhound, JC Penney, Johnson & Johnson, KFC, Merrill Lynch, Seagram Americas, Sony, and United Airlines.

Junior is on a mission to spread the word about African American consumerism. "African-Americans spend 600 billion dollars annually--up 70 percent since 1990--on consumer products, and it is time for corporations to develop strategies to appeal to this segment," she said, before moving on to note some overlooked statistics. "African Americans possess double the population growth rate of white Americans and will account for 30 percent of the total U.S. population growth through 2005. Minorities are earning college degrees almost three-and-a-half times faster than white Americans.

African Americans represent one-third of all households with annual income over $100,000, and nearly half of all African-American households own their homes. Middle class African-Americans grew from 14 percent to 43 percent during the years 1980 to 1994. Growth in small business ownership for African Americans outpaces that of white Americans by five times. More than 60 percent have access to a computer and more than 70 percent agree that the representation of minorities in advertisements influences why they choose one retailer over another."

Junior feels that corporate America is awakening from its slumber. "Slowly, corporations are learning more about the power of the African American consumer and their impact on brand loyalty, consumer preferences, and trend setting, which ultimately increases revenues." However, she cautions that "until corporate America integrates people with cultural and lifestyle differences on their governing boards and decision making staffs, we still have a long road ahead."

Coupled with Junior's statistics on African Americans, Simmons Market Research Bureau reports that the average gay and lesbian employee earns nearly $50,000 per year, well ahead of the national average. Although other sources have placed gay and lesbian earning power between $20,000 to almost $70,000 per year, African-American gays and lesbians remain an untapped target for consumer product manufacturers. "Like the larger minority population, this sub-segment group is growing faster than the general population and soon companies will have to take notice of black gay and lesbian spending power," commented Junior. As more food for thought, she added, "There is a perception amongst marketers that gays and lesbians are only receptive to advertisements for recreational products. We must educate these companies that this subsegment is just as interested in their investment portfolio as their clothing attire."

Junior is one corporate executive who puts her time where her words are. She is a popular guest speaker and a community advocate. Additionally, she offers volunteer marketing advice to non-profit organizations and small community groups, noting, "It is important that we help smaller organizations to claim a bigger piece of consumer retailers' advertising and marketing dollars." Junior's hard work and volunteerism hasn't gone unnoticed. She has been featured in *Advertising*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEALAN WILSON STUDIOS. MAKEUP BY DEANGELO OF NY

Age, Ad Week, Amsterdam News, Black Enterprise, Brand Week, Crain's, and the venerable *New York Times.* Some of this media attention focused on her work as co-director of New American Media Group, a consulting arm of communications conglomerate True North Communications.

"David Bell [True North's Chairman and CEO] is a champion of workplace diversity and has worked closely with us to help companies revisit their media spending programs and diversity initiatives." Junior said she credits Bell and True North's Diversity CEO, Valentine Zammit, with having the vision to create ways to market to groups that historically may have been hard to reach.

"It is important for all Americans--particularly minorities--to stand and to be counted, to respond to workplace surveys, and to participate in the 2000 Census," asserts Junior, who was responsible for integrating African American consumer information into the federal government's Census 2000. "Until workers accurately identify who they are in the workplace, we will have a hard time determining the extent of a particular groups' economic spending power."

The Illinois native credits her childhood traveling with her father, a singer, with her forward vision and universal outlook.

Venus introduces media giant, LaTonya Junior to Marques McClary, who as a board member of Gay Men of African Descent represents the typical black gay consumer.

"My mother, my spiritual educator, was raised in Camp Hill, Alabama, and my father was born in Harold, Arkansas. I can remember seeing Whites Only, drinking fountains when we were on the road," Junior said. "Della Reese was probably the first person that I met as a child who had a profound impact on my adult life."

Junior also recalls meetings with singer Sarah Vaughan, South African President Nelson Mandela, Reverend Jesse Jackson, Maya Angelou, and, of course, Oprah Winfrey. All these people impacted her career. She cites American Book Award winner J. California Cooper, and *In Search of Satisfaction,* among others, for providing her with silent strength.

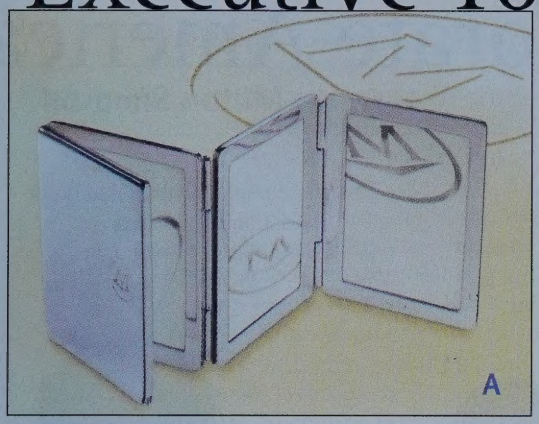
In 1999, Junior was honored with the prestigious "40 Under 40 Black Achiever award," in recognition of her corporate accomplishments. Later that year, she was selected as a Direct Marketing Association ECHO Award Judge. Yet, she is not content to rest on her laurels, adding, "If I had a magic wand, I would like to see all companies, both Fortune 500 corporations and small businesses, develop a thorough diversity training program and a fair allocation of communication dollars. For example, if 25 percent of your customer base is minority consumers, then equal allocation should be rendered. Never underestimate the power of your pocket." Write the chairman of a company if you think they have ignored your group. These companies spend more than 200 billion dollars each year to market to consumers (less than one percent is targeted to the diverse consumer), yet, they constantly tell me they don't know how to reach African American consumers outside the large metropolitan areas or they don't know people within the alternative lifestyle population who use their products. When I'm asked to speak with local community groups, I urge them to keep pressuring corporate America. "Their dollars count just as much as any other group. In essence, stand up and be counted."

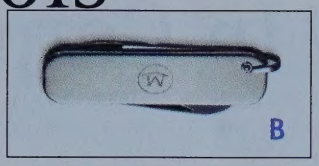
LaTonya Junior, who spends her precious time renovating her home just outside of Manhattan, is a world traveler, marketing visionary, and diversity expert. Clearly, she stands up for many populations and continues to be counted. As we move through the New Millennium, we can only hope that more minorities will have the courage and boldness to follow her lead.

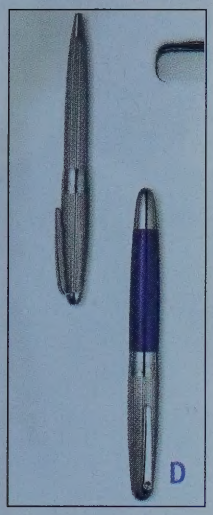
Make it Count! Census 2000 & your survey at www.venusmagzine.com

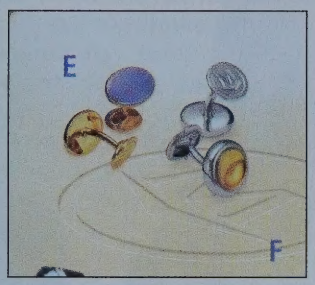
Photography by DeAlan Wilson Studio, Makeup by De Angelo of New York

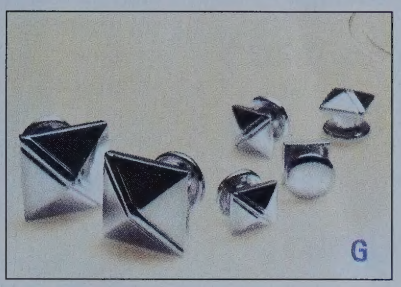
Executive Tools

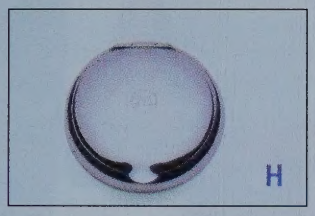


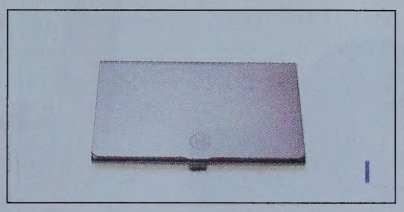


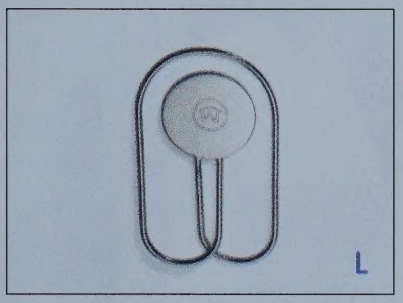


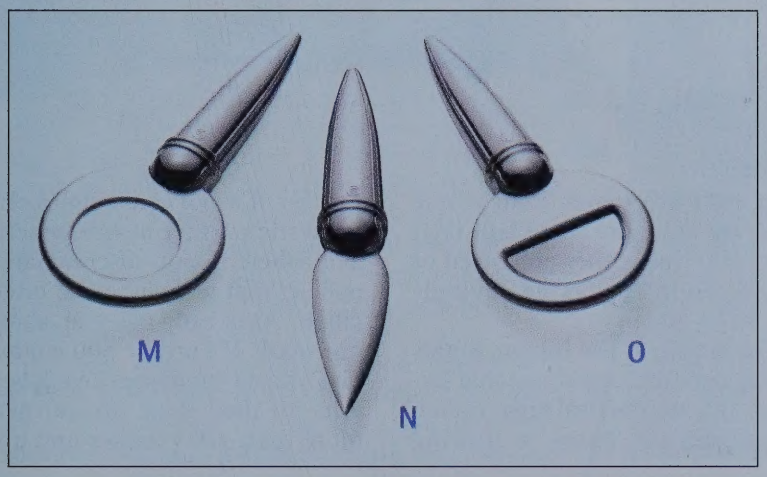












A-Folding Photo Case, Signi Sterling Silver
B-Pocket Knife $175.
C-Trevi Sterling Textured Cuff link $125 with matching money clip $145

Trevi
Palladium Plated Textured Pens. Roller Ball With Blue Lacquer
D-Barrell $135.
Ball Point $110.

Cuff Links
E-Ono Round $275. 18K Gold and Hematite.
F-Oval $525.

G-**Vizio Pyramid** $95
Matching Studs $125
Sterling Silver and 18K Gold.
H-Sterling Silver Petite Box $125.

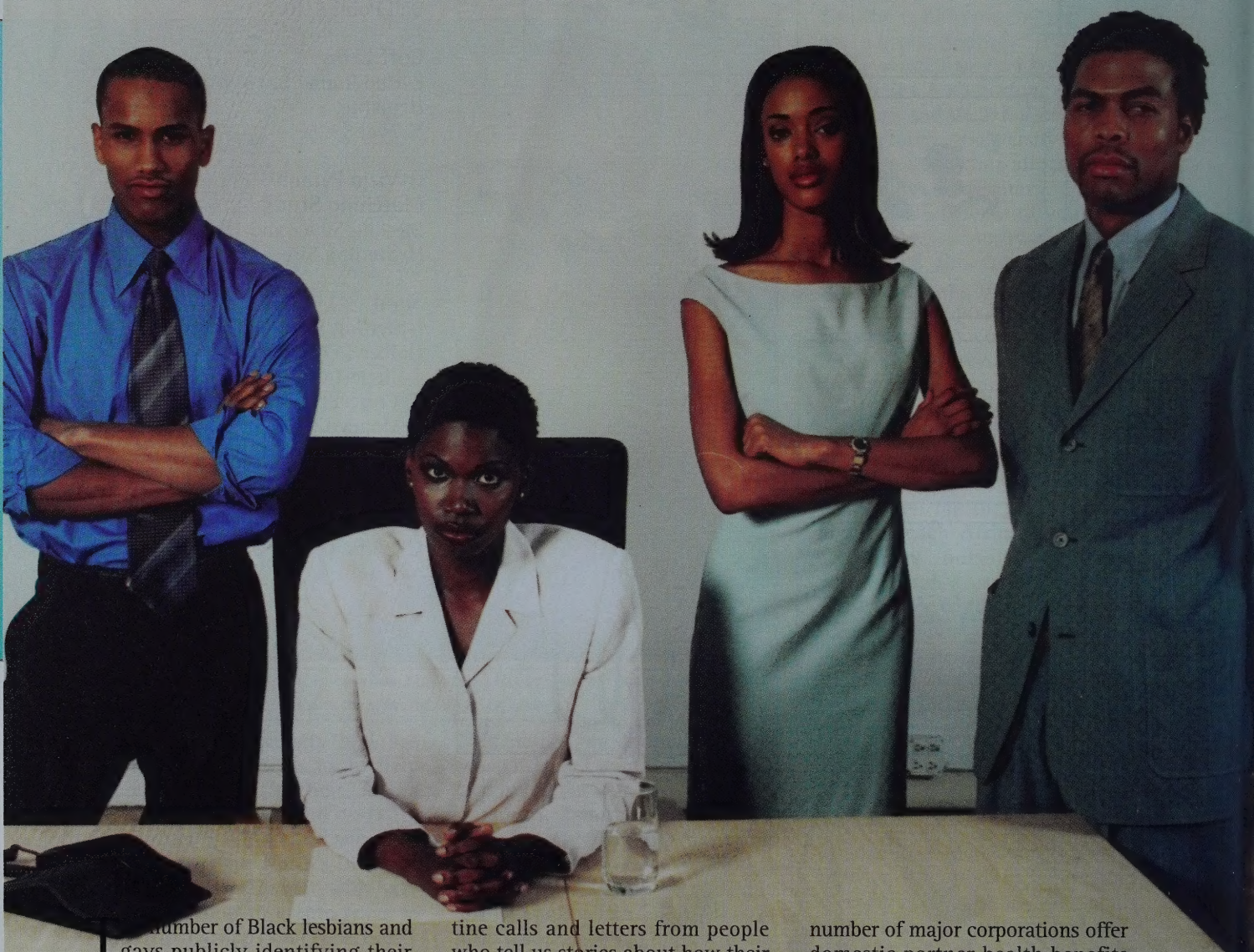
Signi
I-Sterling Silver Business Card Holder $175.
J-Circle-In-Square, cuff links $195.
K-Crescent Wedge, cuff links $260.
L-Money Clip $45.

M-Magnifying Glass $115.
N-Letter Opener $95.
O-Bottle Opener $95.

Black & Gay In Corporate America

by Milton Simpson

Photography: Michael Rod Taylor
Stylist:Daniella Roebuck
Hair & Makeup: Andre Jones



number of Black lesbians and gays publicly identifying their sexual orientation is on the rise," notes Charlene Cothran, publisher and editor-in-chief, of *Venus* Magazine. "The corporate landscape is also changing as employers compete to attract and retain the best workers. We receive routine calls and letters from people who tell us stories about how their sexuality has either enhanced or worsened their working environment."

According to The Human Rights Campaign, the largest national lesbian and gay political organization in the United States, a growing number of major corporations offer domestic partner health benefits and adhere to non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation. As of early this year, almost one-sixth of Fortune 500 companies offered employees health benefits for their same sex partners. More than 170 colleges and uni-

Stacey - Light blue dress by Anne Klein, Mia -Baby pink jacket, shell, pant by Anne Klein Willis -Suit by Maurice Malone, Tie by Zannetti, shirt by Eton, Chris-Shirt by Alexander's, pants by Maurice Malone, Tie by Zannetti

versities and government agencies offered domestic partner benefits as well. Likewise, half of all Fortune 500 companies have written non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation, a significant rise from the past decade.

"It is important for corporate America to recognize the contributions of all its employees," notes Ronald Moore, a Hewlett-Packard executive.

Moore goes on to say, "For gay and lesbian African American employees there is a tendency to operate in secrecy, to underplay sexuality while standing up to implied and overt racial discrimination. In order for us to see a change in corporate America, we must first work to reduce racism within the greatergay community and to eliminate homophobia within the black community. Once this is achieved, we may see more folks feeling comfortable to be out in the workplace."

"I work in an all boys club environment where heterosexuality is the dominant topic of conversation. I spend more time working with clients and co-workers to look past my 'locks,'" adds Marcus Allen, a computer technology expert who recently worked as a Y2K consultant for Wall Street powerhouse Goldman, Sachs. "I've worked for gay nonprofit organizations and for staunchly conservative Wall Street firms, and there is a difference," Allen goes on to say. The New York native's bio is filled with assignments for companies as diverse as Skadden, Rutgers University, Green Point Bank, Bloomingdales, and Gay Men's Health Crisis. An online entrepreneur, Allen operates www.msthings.com, a webite tailored for African Americans in the life, and serves on the Gay Men of African Descent GMAD's board of directors.

"For some gay and lesbian executives, it may be more practical for them to start a business, where their sexuality [is not] a factor in the workplace," says Rodney Gooden, president of the Boston-based Concepts & Solutions. The thirty-something executive left a fast track position with publishing giant R.R. Donnelly to start his print and packaging brokerage business. "Being your own boss allows you to create the optimal workplace, an environment where all types of individuals can succeed."

James Harris is comfortable taking the more traditional employment route. A paralegal with Testa Hurwitz & Thibeault, one of the largest law firms in the Northeast, he says, "I was asked by one of my coworkers, 'Are you Gay?' I answered affirmatively, and it doesn't seem to have had a negative impact on my career." The Colby College graduate hopes to attend Harvard Law School in the fall.

"For many women, it's a challenge to compete with the white boys, compete with the brothers, and then on top of that to say, 'Hey, I'm Queer get used to it!' exclaims a Southern lesbian executive who feels that sexuality should not be discussed in the workplace. "It's tough enough trying to prove that you belong in upper management, let alone educating folks that not all homosexuals are evil."

"We are at a turning point in society," concludes Devellus Glover, a public relations consultant and entertainment producer of the upcoming American debut of *Fever: Jazz! Blues! Broadway!* featuring Theresa Hightower. "As corporations redefine their daily environment to acknowledge and reward contributions from all types of employees, it will be easier for African American gays and lesbians to be out in the workplace. I predict this will happen within the New Millennium."

"For many women,
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compete with the white boys,
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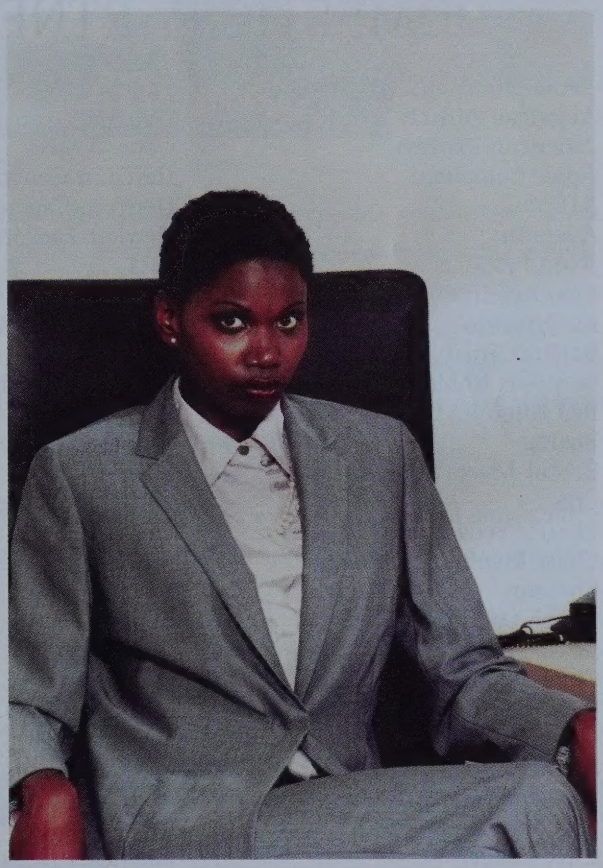
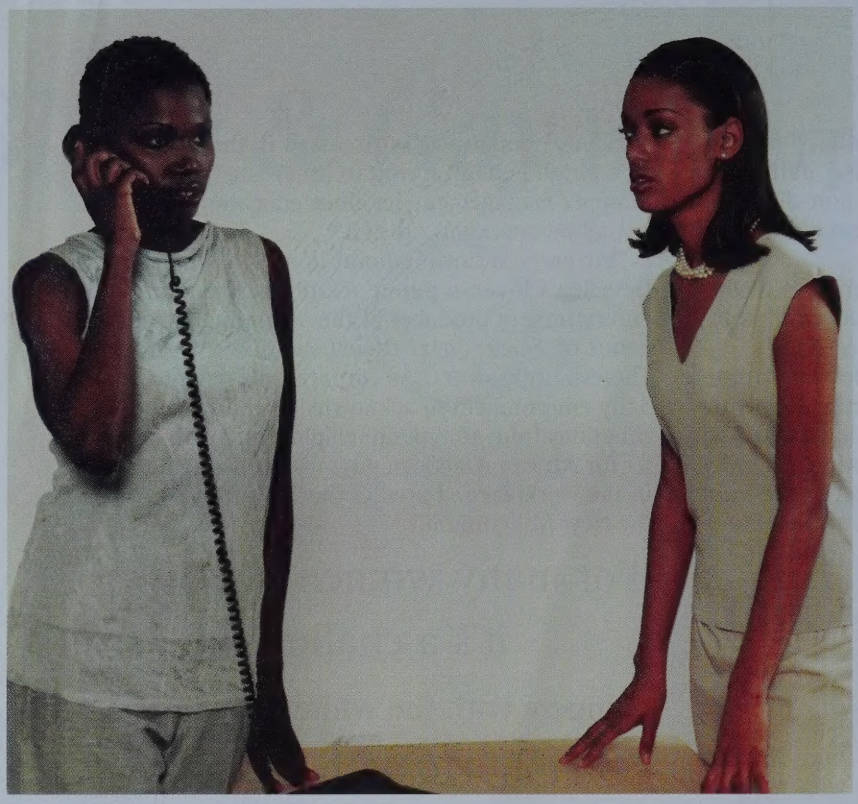
and then on top of that to say,
'Hey, I'm Queer get used to it!'



Mia- -Grey linen pant Suit by Anne Klein



Mia -Grey shell, grey linen pant by Anne Klein , Stacey -Blush cartigan, Blush suede skirt by Anne Klein

U.S. STATES THAT PROHIBIT EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION

California
Connecticut
Hawaii
Massachusetts
Minnesota
New Jersey
Nevada
New Hampshire
Rhode Island
Vermont
Wisconsin

Source: Human Rights Campaign

MAJOR CORPORATIONS THAT OFFER DOMESTIC PARTNER HEALTH BENEFITS

Aetna Life & Casualty Insurance
American Airlines
American Express
Apple Computer
AT&T
Avnet Inc.
Avon Products
BankAmerica
BankBoston
Bankers Trust
Barnes & Noble
Bell Atlantic
Boeing
Bristol-Myers Squibb
CBS
Charles Schwab & Company
Chase Manhattan Bank
Chevron
Chubb Life Insurance
Cisco Systems Inc.
Compaq Computer Inc.
Computer Associates
Costco Wholesale
Eastman Kodak Co.
Electronic Data Systems Corporation
Estee Lauder
Fannie Mae
Gap Inc.
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Source: gfn.com; Human Rights Campaign; Venus archives

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Joe Carlis

Sweet Baby J'ai

Los Angeles-based vocalist Sweet Baby J'ai lives, no, delights in making quality jazz and blues music. J'ai's *The Art of Blue* (Sunset Music Group) is an exceptionally well-produced debut, featuring the talents of known jazz artists pianist Nate Morgan, bassist Nedra Wheeler, drummer Fritz Wise, saxophonist Louis Taylor and renowned trumpeter Oscar Brashear. Serving as vocalist, songwriter, musician and producer on the album, J'ai's potency is large and looming. Stand back: this sister is about to blow up.

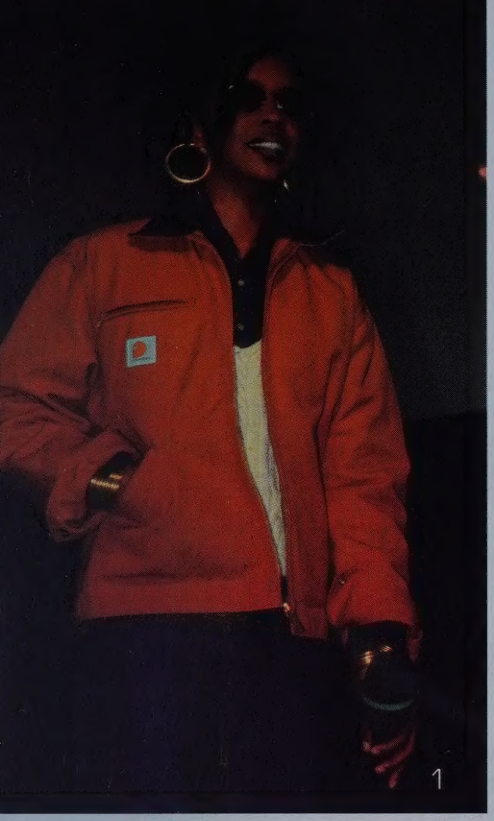
This Kansas City-native was born linked to jazz royalty. Her Uncle, Vernon Gower, played bass with both Billie Holiday and Lionel Hampton. Her cousin played guitar with Dizzy Gillespie, and her father was a local guitarist.

She reportedly wrote songs at the age of five, and was sneaking into nightclubs at eight to watch her father perform with a melange of top touring musicians. Under the guidance of her mentor, legendary vocal coach Phil Moore, J'ai initially began work as a jazz singer. For more than ten years. J'ai has been captivating audiences--nationally and internationally--at festivals, clubs, and benefits. She's warmed audiences with her soothing vocals and her unconventional, yet effective, musicanship. Sister plays a washboard--traditionally a Cajun instrument--that she affectionately calls a "jazzboard."

The power and elasticity of J'ai's voice is appropriately showcased on *The Art of Blue*. Without bombastic shrill or pretentious vocal gymnastics, she glides and soars through each song, present and accountable. J'ai tips her hat to late jazz great Carmen McRae on *Carmen's Blues*, perhaps the most engaging of the dozen songs that adorn this disc. She imitates the legend's stylings, telling the listener that it was McRae who taught her to pronounce every word precisely. As the song builds, J'ai gives a wonderfully intimate portrait of McRae, illustrating the dynamicism of her own voice.

Other memorable cuts, many of them J'ai originals, include graceful "There Was a Time," the impassioned "Soldiers of Love," the hilarious "Hop on the Pony," and the workable "Louisiana Stomp." Like legendary blues singers and jazz divas before her, Sweet Baby J'ai has the chops and delivers the goods. But unlike many of those legends, she is one part blues diva and one part jazz diva, and all the way original.

Steven Fullwood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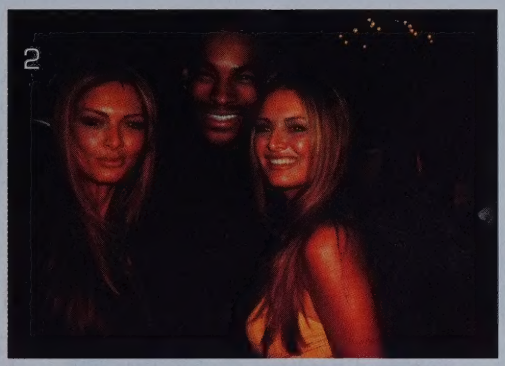
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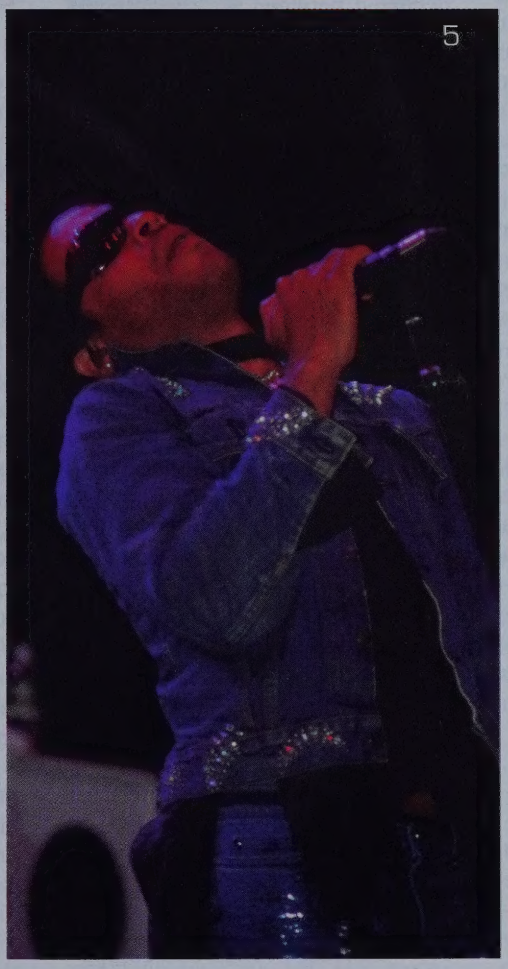
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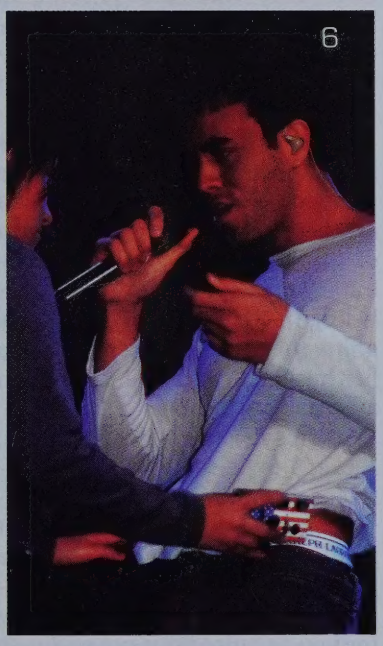
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Tina Paul fifi bear photography

STAR POWER!
1. Alta Vista kicks off Knowledge Revolution with Grammy Award-winner Lauryn Hill at Hammerstein Ballroom, NYC. 2. Carol and Darlene , The Bernaola Twins with Tyson Beckford at Playboy's Playmates 2000. 3. Jennifer Lopez at Z100's Jingle Ball at Madison Square Garden 4.Aretha Franklin signing "From These Roots" at Barnes & Nobles, NYC 5.Lenny Kravitz at Z 100's Jingle Ball 6. Enrique Iglesias at Z100's Jingle Ball. 7. Lil' Kim and Madonna at 1999 "VH1/Vogue Fashion Awards" at the 69th Regiment Armory.

The View From Here

By Brian Keith Jackson
Reviewed By Lincoln Pettaway

The View From Here tells of the hardships faced by a small Southern family. Anne Anderson Thomas is the main character and her unborn daughter narrates the story from within her mother's womb. As the story progresses, Anne realizes that her five sons and unborn daughter need their mother to take a stand-- on their behalf as well as her own. They need Anne to stand up to their recently unemployed father and overbearing sister-in law-- not only for them but also for herself.

Like a patchwork quilt, Jackson's story is pieced together with letters from Anne's childhood friend, Ida Mae, narration from the unborn daughter and flashbacks. A combination of events fortify Anne's belief in herself and she finally gains the courage to stand up to her husband, reclaim her children and take back control of her life.

In answer to our questions, Jackson explored some of the influences on his writing.

Q: You live New York City, yet you write about the South, where you grew up. Do you find that separation, or semi-exile, necessary for you to write your novels?

A: Well, you can take the boy out of the South, but...I have an intense long distance love affair with the South, yet I'm still working on my relationship with New York. I'm sure we'll see more from her (New York) in the future.

Q: Did you use the father's death as a catalyst for this novel?

(*Walking Through Mirrors* is Jackson's second novel.)

A: In *The View Form Here*, I used a birth as the catalyst, so in "Walking Through Mirrors" it happens to be a death. In a sense, I see them as similar for they have a huge impact on what will or has occurred between the two. I want to show that issues should be resolved while people are alive so that there can be some kind of release.

Women Together, Portraits of Love, Commitment and Life

Essays By Mona Holmlund
Photos By Cyndy Warwick
Foward BY Candace Gingrich

Women Together is a great coffee-table book. Its presentation is subtle and warm, with snapshots taken from the lives of more than 30 lesbian couples. Cyndy Warwick's work is reminiscent of a '60s version of Life Magazine, with a feminine sensibility. Warwick's use of light and composition are also very effective in their understatement.

The work by Warwick and writer Mona Holmlund includes people of color-- African-Americans, Asian-Americans and Hispanics. Not only do we see them and hear their stories, we also feel through this visual and literary collaboration the kinetic emotion that has propelled these women through a life of love on their own terms.

Left Out: The Politics Of Exclusion/Essays/ 1964-1999

by Martin Duberman
Review by Lincoln Pettaway

Finally, a white gay cultural critic who is willing to speak honestly and openly about the issues of race, class and sexual identity. In Martin Duberman's essay on *Racism in the Gay Male World*, which appears in his most recent book, *Left Out: The Politics of Exclusion/Essays/1964-1999*, he says, "The gay movement cannot opt for putting its primary energy toward winning mainstream America's approval and simultaneously pretend not to have jettisoned its earlier determination to address the plight of all gay people: the invisibility of lesbians, the discrimination against non-whites, (and) the scornful disregard of the rural poor. "

In "Left Out," Duberman provides us with a new perspective on racism. Much of his collection of articles, essays and speeches, which is drawn from his 25 years as a cultural critic and activist speaks specifically to the historical reconsideration of the effects of slavery. Another portion of "Left Out," addresses the racial schisms that have formed within the gay community.

Our reviews can also be viewed at www.venusmagazine.com

The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and The Breakdown of Black Politics

by Cathy J. Cohen (1999, The University of Chicago Press)
ISBN 0-226-11298-6
www.press.uchicago.edu

The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Break-down of Black Politics is the first full-scale exploration of the social, political, and cultural impact of AIDS on the African-American community. Cathy Cohen unflinchingly brings to light how the AIDS epidemic fractured, rather than united, the black community. More broadly, she analyzes how other cross-cutting issues--of class, gender, and sexuality--challenge accepted ideas of who belongs in the community.

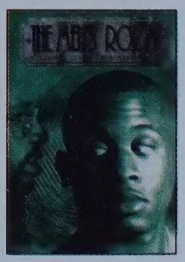
Examining the response of a changing community to an issue laced with stigma, "The Boundaries of Blackness" offers valuable insight into how the politics of the African-American community--and other marginal groups--will evolve in the twenty-first century.

Cathy J. Cohen is assistant professor of political science and African-American Studies at Yale University and co-editor of *Women Transforming Politics: An Alternative Reader* (NYU Press, 1997).

The Men's Room

by Michangelo Scriggs
Review By Lincoln Pettaway

The Men's Room is an excellent first novel by Michangelo Scriggs, which investigates the complicated subject of male rape. The main character James Weldon Thomas or "Jimmy," takes us through a plethora of experiences and relationships that eventually lead us to his painful past and self discovery.



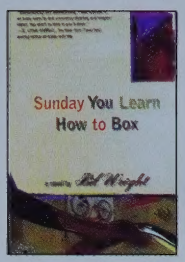
In the book Jimmy becomes a sexual abuse victim at age 17. Jimmy doesn't know his attacker. At first, Jimmy bottles his secret inside. For many years he doesn't tell a soul. All throughout college he maintains his secret.

As Jimmy enters law school in Houston, he begins to open up, learning more about himself as a person and about his sexuality. He finds it hard at first to come to grips with being gay, but after a time he realizes that it's the only way for him. Not only does Jimmy confront his inner self, but he also confronts his attacker in this story, which should not be missed.

Sunday You Learn How to Box

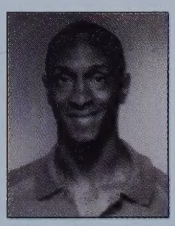
by Bil Wright
Review by Steve Fullwood

Louis Bowman is a 14-year-old sissy, and the Black community won't stand for it. Least of all Jeanette Stamps, his overbearing, terminally bitter mother. One morning she peers across the breakfast table, over her glass of scotch, and chides her son for doing "... that. That thing you're doing now. That's why Ben says you're a damn punk. He says he can tell already that you're gonna be a faggot. I'd appreciate it if you proved him wrong."



This potentially soul-shattering moment is brilliantly captured in Bil Wright's debut novel *Sunday You Learn How to Box*, a coming of age story about a teenager dealing with the complexities of masculinity, poverty, and his budding sexuality in a housing project circa 1965. To Wright's credit, he never explains exactly what Louis did that morning--dancing, swaying his hips, or popping his gum--to invoke his mother's rage. Bottom line, whatever he did was outlaw, and in need of fixing.

That's where the book's title comes in. Ben, Louis' stepfather and nemesis, is coaxed into teaching the bookish boy to box in order to protect himself from the neighborhood toughs. Louis couldn't be less interested if he tried, feeling that the only reason his mother commissioned this lesson is to give Ben permission to hit him as a way to toughen him up. In contemporary literature, you won't find a more realistic and sensitively drawn portrait of an impovished Black mother living in the ghetto, in conflict over her boy child's sexuality. *Sunday You Learn How to Box* delivers a knock-out punch.


Author, Bil Wright

Read any good books lately?
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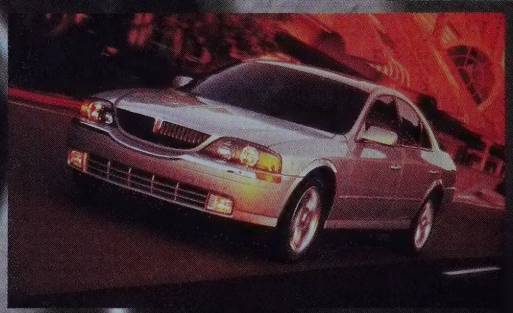
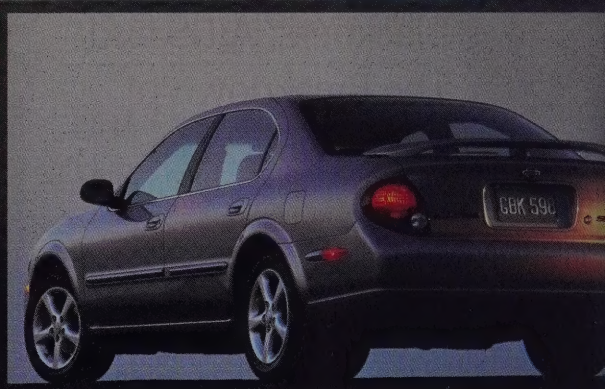




NissanMaxima

Nissan Maxima

The all-new, fifth generation Maxima represents a major advancement of Nissan's current class-leading flagship sedan. Its "cut above" design blends performance and luxury attributes in equal parts--along with exciting styling, an ergonomically advanced and spacious interior and exceptional quality and value. Its engine is a 3.0-liter V6, producing a respectable level of horsepower and torque. The all-new interior design focuses on style, integration, enhanced driver control and quietness housed in a roomier, more powerful package. The 2000 Maxima has come a long way since its introduction in 1981.

Nissan Frontier

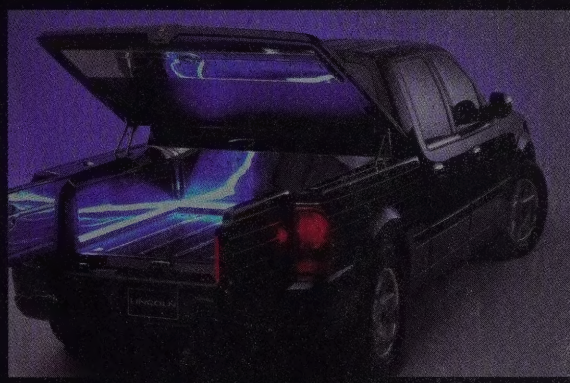
For the 2000 model year, the full line of Nissan Frontier compact pickups expands to 11 models with the addition of two new models--Frontier Crew Cab (pictured) and the Frontier Desert Runner. The Frontier Crew Cab is the first compact truck with four forward-hinged doors offered for sale in the United States. Buyers can now choose just the right engine, driveline and equipment level to perfectly fit their needs and budget, ranging from 4x2 XE Regular Cab to the top-of-the-line 4x4 SE Crew Cab. Nissan's long heritage of producing innovative, high-quality compact pick-ups dates back 40 years. As the company moves into the New Millennium, its goal is "to give customers more reasons than ever to own a Frontier."

Nissan Pathfinder

The 2000 Pathfinder has a powerful, yet elegant, appearance. Under its new skin, Pathfinder continues to feature its famed MonoFrame construction--the body, floor plan and frame are a single structure. This keeps squeaks and rattles to a minimum, especially off-road. Its makers strive for premium ride quality, comfort, convenience, safety, and security. For this model year, the Pathfinder received a new muscular front end design, new tailgate and taillights, and a refined interior. It is available in six well-equipped models, eleven exterior colors, with a 3.3-liter V6 engine.

Lincoln Blackwood

The new Lincoln Blackwood is described as the ultimate utility vehicle, with all the comfort of a luxury sedan and the convenience and versatility of a sport utility vehicle. It has a 5.4-liter V-8 engine and is a four-door, four-passenger vehicle that is an extension of the extremely successful Lincoln Navigator--with one important difference: an enclosed 4'8" box that serves as a trunk. The four-door configuration of the passenger area, coupled with the extended trunk area, give the Lincoln Blackwood the look and feel of a touring coach from the 1930s. One Ford executive notes, "Blackwood is a vehicle that is as much at home hauling horses to an equestrian event in Texas as it is carrying a party of four to a Broadway play."



Ford Explorer Sport Trac

The 2001 Ford Explorer Sport Trac is the newest member of Ford's best-selling Explorer family. It represents an important step in the fast-growing SUV segment by creating significantly more room for cargo than the traditional SUV, without compromising the interior package SUV customers want. It features a 4.0-liter V-6 engine, and combines the benefits of the four-door Explorer with the added utility of a 4-foot-long cargo area made of durable sheet molding composite. The cargo area's features allow it to be converted to easily accommodate a wide variety of cargo. The Explorer Sport Trac will be available next year. It will be the first vehicle of its kind offered for retail sale. Great for the active lifestyle, a "one-vehicle-does-it-all" philosophy reigns here.

Ford Excursion

The Ford Excursion is designed to provide customers with a fresh, new choice in the heavy-duty utility market. It offers a roomier interior for passengers, more utility for activities such as towing, and more versatility for carrying cargo and luggage. At the same time, it sets a higher standard for safety and protection of the environment. For personal use, the Explorer is primarily a people mover, and its well-appointed interior reflects that goal. It features comfortable seating for up to nine adults, a choice of three engines, optional four-wheel drive, and the largest cargo volume of any vehicle in its class. "Maximum functionality and flexibility" is the motto behind the Ford Excursion.

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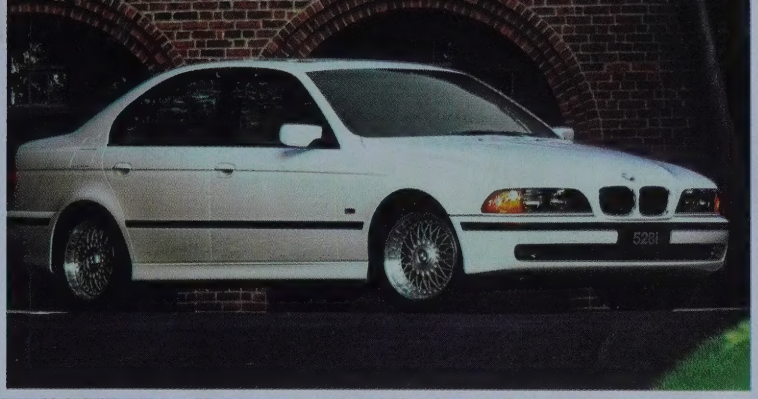


B M W

Sporty

The new BMW 3 series coupes are the latest in a line of sporty two-door models introduced by BMW since the 1930s. Although sharing much of the drivetrain and chassis of the award-winning four-door sedans, every body panel is unique to the design of the coupe. Two models are available--the 323Ci, powered by a 2.5 liter, 170 horsepower inline six or the 328Ci, powered by a 193-horsepower in-line six. Standard sport suspension and Dynamic Stability Control deliver the kind of handling and performance which is a hallmark of BMW automobiles.

BMW 300 Series base prices $27,560 - $34,560

Dynamic Control

Greater value highlights the changes for model year 2000 for the 5 Series sedans. Dynamic Stability Control along with Dynamic Brake Control are now standard on the 528i. A 5-speed Steptronic automic transmission is now optional as well. Standard featurews on the 540i now include Xenon headlamps and rain sensing wipers. An optional sport wheel enhances the appearance on both the 540i 6-speed and 540i with port package. All 5 Series come equipped with front 2-stage Smart Airbags. Also, standard is Full Maitenance for 3 years, 36,000 miles.

BMW 2000 5 Series base prices $39,470 - $54,050

Massaging Comfort

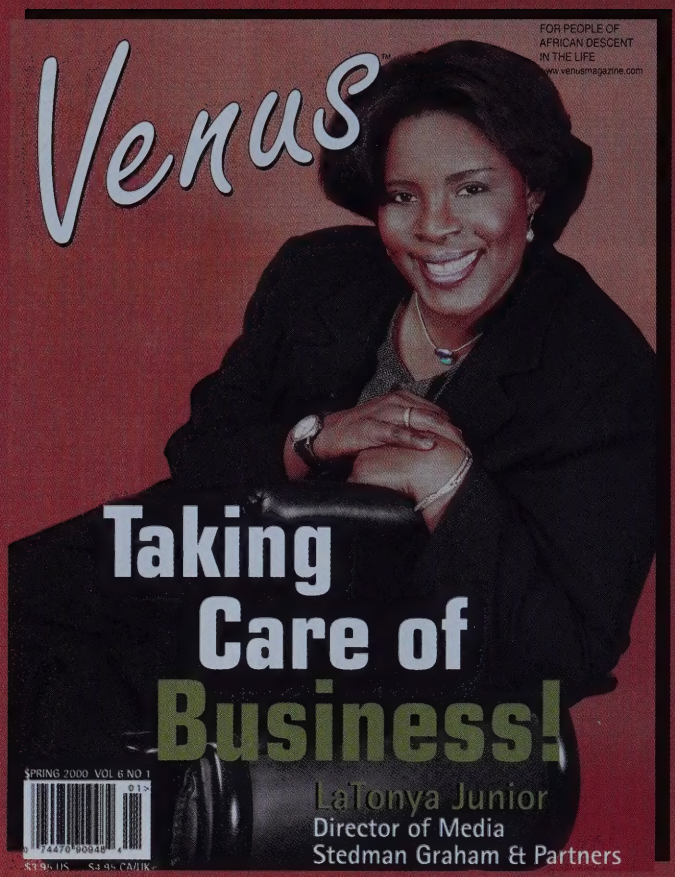
BMW's silky-smooth V-12 powered flagship enters 2000 offering an even higher level of standard equipment while maintaining 1999 price levels. A new Highline package offers two exclusive exterior colors with upgraded leather upholstery combinations. Also new for 2000 is an Active Comfort Seat designed to reduce fatigue on long journeys through genlte massaging action.

BMW 2000 7 Series base prices $62,970 - $124,970

Sport Activity

With the X5, BMW has created the world's first Sports Activity Vehicle. Its all-wheel-drive technology delivers all-roads capability, while the suspension, braking and engine response deliver on-road performance that sets new standards for vehices that can also venture off the pavement. Powered by a 282-horsepower, 4.4 liter V8, the BMW X5 has technological and safety advancements found throughout the BMW product range, including the exclusive BMW head Protection System. Full Maintence is included for 3 years or 36,000 miles.

BMW X-5 base price $49,970



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For People of African Descent In The Life

In Remembrance A'Lelia Walker

1885-1931

"R.E. Mercer/Schomburg Center Portrait Collection"

An engraved invitation

to Walker's fabulously furnished townhouse on West136th Street, was, as they might have said at the time, **"the cat's meow."**

Through streets crowded with thousands of curious onlookers, A'Lelia Walker's funeral cortege left Harlem and wended its way to the Bronx. A single airplane piloted by Col. Hubert Julian, dubbed by the New York press as The black Eagle, circled overhead as if keeping a celestial vigil. Just before the interment at Woodlawn Cemetery, Julian, according to the Amsterdam News, "descended noiselessly from the heavens and dropped a final floral tribute to the memory of the dead heiress." Poet Langston Hughes who had written a poem for the funereal occasion, later recalled that Walker's death was "really the end of the gay time of the New Negro Era in rlarlem."

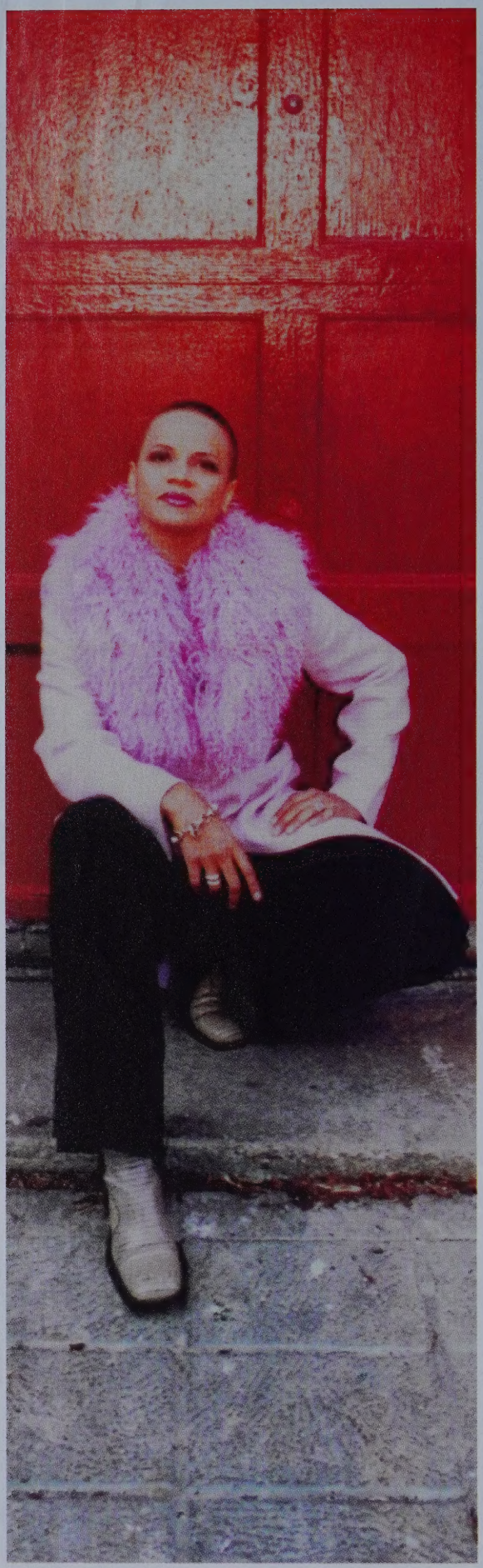
In the 1920s, the thrice married A'Lelia Walker Robinson Wilson Kennedy, daughter of millionaire Madam C. J. Walker, dazzled Harlem with her parties and soirees. An engraved invitation to one of Walker's parties at either her fabulously furnished townhouse on West 136th Street, or her more intimate apartment on Edgecomb Avenue was, as they might have said at the time, "the cat's meow." Walker owned a Villa in Irvington-On-the Hudson, but did not frequent it often. Present at her expensively catered events would be poets, novelists, journalists, painters, musicians, socialites, gamblers and Pullman Car porters. According to a story that may be apocryphal, at one of these soirees the white guests were served pig's feet and chitterlings while the black guests dined on champagne and caviar. At another, the Crown Prince of Sweden sent a message that he was outside and couldn't get in. Instead of buzzing him in, Walker sent down a bottle of champagne by one of her servants.

Not all of Harlem's high society appreciated A'Lelia Walker's parties. David Lewis wrote in his book When Harlem Was In Vogue, that Grace Nail Johnson, James Weldon Johnson's wife and Harlem's social dictator, "would as soon have done the Black Bottom on Lenox Avenue as cross A'Lelia's threshold." For that crowd, Walker had not attended college; was the daughter of a washer woman who became wealthy by trying to make black women's hair look like white women's; and, most important, A'Lelia was thick-lipped, broad nosed and dark.

None of that bothered Walker. She had something they didn't: lots and lots of money. She also supported the arts in a way they couldn't. For example, she used a section of her town house as a meeting place for the young Harlem Renaissance artists and called it "The Dark Tower."

We're still writing and talking about A'Lelia Walker; we hardly know who her detractors were.

Phil Petrie



{ Frankie Fitzgerald

Composer/Songwriter by Kym-Kisha Nixon

Most composers we hear about today are those who have written and produced for artists like Janet Jackson, Toni Braxton and Whitney Houston.

The aforementioned ladies have made Babyface and Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis famous. These are the writers and composers who have been in the forefront of the industry in the last decade. But what exactly does a composer do? Ever notice the lack of female representation? Venus magazine searched out the women composers in the music industry and caught up with Frankie Fitzgerald, Composer /Songwriter, to answer these and other questions:

Venus: What is a composer? And what is it you do exactly?

FF: I am a composer and a songwriter. I write, arrange, and produce lyrics and music for songs, as well as compose music for a variety of uses for broadcast.

V: What is the difference?

FF: Composers write music, a complete work in and of themselves but not necessarily in song form per se. Think film scores, TV themes, underscores and background music. A songwriter writes music in song form. Think radio play, CDs the things music videos are made for.

V: When did you get started in the business?

FF: I've worked professionally in the business for 16 years, but I've been about my own business of songwriting all my life. I'd walk around singing the music that I had in my head at age three or four. When my family got an organ I was six years old and I began trying to sound things out right away.

V: Typically, when we hear about composers it's usually Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms--today's most popular composers seem to be so far away from the invention of music, do you agree? If so, what has happened in the industry to allow this?

FF: First, realize that music is evolutionary, as is every art form, so it is not surprising that popular music is where it is today. We could go back further, but if we start to look at music since the 70's--the music that is, by no accident, being so heavily sampled today--there was lots of originality among groups. Earth Wind & Fire didn't sound like Rufus, who didn't sound like Stevie who didn't try to imitate Roberta Flack, etc. But maintaining groups can be costly for labels. At the same time, electronic music technology was growing and along came disco. This showed the labels that fewer musicians could be used (less money could be spent) to make music that provided a greater return. So we entered into the age of the producer/production team, which really took a foothold in the 80s, where instead of original sounding groups, labels started dealing with individuals who would give them a certain marketable sound. The same rules apply as with human evolution, a smaller gene pool gives you a less interesting array of outcomes. That's how we've ended with so many artists sounding the same these days. The sampling of the 70's music, to me, embodies the

Meli'sa Morgan }
featuring Soul Switch

hunger we still have for originality. I think, ever so slowly, the industry is again becoming interested in variety of expression, e.g., Maxwell, Erykah Badu, D'Angelo, but only because it is marketable.

V: Have you composed anything that I might be familiar with?

FF: I've worked extensively with Lifetime Television, doing countless movie promos and themes for programs (Barbara Walters, Lifetime Film Festival), and promos for the WNBA. I just scored a short film entitled Next Afternoon featuring Heavy D that aired on Showtime this past February.

V: Do you feel any bias in the industry regarding women?

FF: Hell yeah. Invariably when I walk into a studio situation, people think I am someone's girlfriend or a singer. They don't assume that I am the producer, writer and arranger. That always pisses me off!

V: How do you survive for sixteen years and what one lesson have you found to be crucial for continued success?

FF: An UNWAVERING commitment to your own vision. Actually, I'm just beginning to understand how important it is to be true to oneself. There can be so much rejection, so many closed doors that it is tempting to say "Well, maybe if I write what's out there now, I can get a foot in the door." But what is wrong in that is that you stop honoring what is in your heart. What becomes of a song when you share it with others is only half, maybe even less, of the equation. You have a responsibility to yourself first to express your soul's song.

DJ Cameron and Cato Jones are new breed DJ's /producers on a mission to bridge the gap between R&B and underground dance music. Cato, a native of New York, met DJ Cameron four years ago at the grand opening of a new house club in Queens, NY. Realizing they had similar DJ styles and musical taste, they came together to form SoulSwitch Productions. Cato and DJ Cameron called on a few devoted friends to help create Believe In Yourself." They included Don Hamilton and Wallace Gary, who provided excellent vocal backings under the direction of Ms. Tonni (Funkin' for Jamaica) Smith.

On lead is veteran R&B diva Meli'sa Morgan, who is noted for her duet with Kashif on their cover of Mother's Finest's "Love Changes," and, of course, her cover of The Artist's "Do Me Baby." Meli'sa Morgan began singing in church at age nine. This lovely Queens native attended the prestigious Juliard School. She later sang background for Chaka Khan, Whitney Houston, and Melba Moore, to name a few. Meli'sa landed a record deal with Capitol Records, where she recorded Do Me Baby, scoring a hit with the title track.

"Do You Still Love Me" and "Fools Paradise" were also hit singles. By 1992, she left Capitol and signed with Pendulum/Elektra Records. The first release, Still In Love With You, reached the top 20 on Billboard's R&B chart. Its title track reached number two on Billboard's dance chart.

Meli'sa is no stranger to the underground house music scene. She is the former vocalist in front of The Shades of Love's garage hit, "Keep In Touch," which resurfaced in 1995 with a slammin' remix that hit number 1 on Billboard's dance chart and went to number 1 across Europe and Japan. Meli'sa was also featured on Jay-Z's hit remix, "Can't Knock the Hustle." "Believe In Yourself" is a sure crowd mover and chart topper. The chemistry between Cato and DJ Cameron is clearly evident on this single.

by Nigel Jackson

Gaye Adegbalola

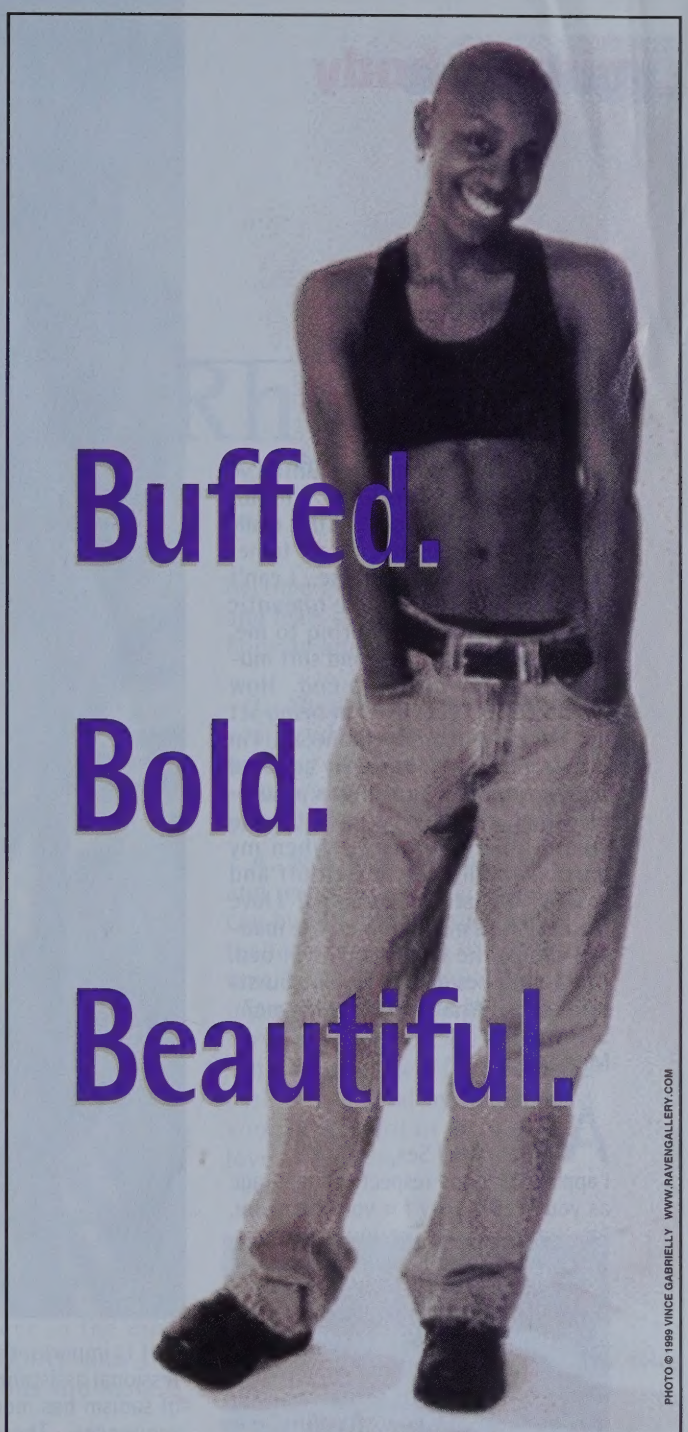
Award-winning singer/songwriter/vocalist/guitarist Gaye Adegbalola's musical roots run deep. As founding and current member of Saffire-The Uppity Blues Women, Gaye not only rediscovered the blues she first met as a child, she put her stamp on them, helping grow Saffire from local sensation to international phenomenon. Adegbalola's vocal range varies from the lubriciousness of Sarah Vaughn to the crisp sonority of Nina Simone. Now with her first solo album, *Bitter Sweet Blues* on Alligator Records, Gaye reaches deep into her past and creates a musical statement for today and for the future.

AMASSI L.A. recently hosted *Women in Jazz* featuring legendary vocalist Chaka Khan, picture here with AMASSI's executive director, Cleo Manago.

"who said that?"

Craig Bailey

"Doing AIDS work is like dancing with a bear. You cannot get tired and sit down. You've got to wait for the bear to get tired before you can sit down!"--Dr. Joycelyn Elders, World AIDS Day, St. Marks AME Church, Harlem, NY.



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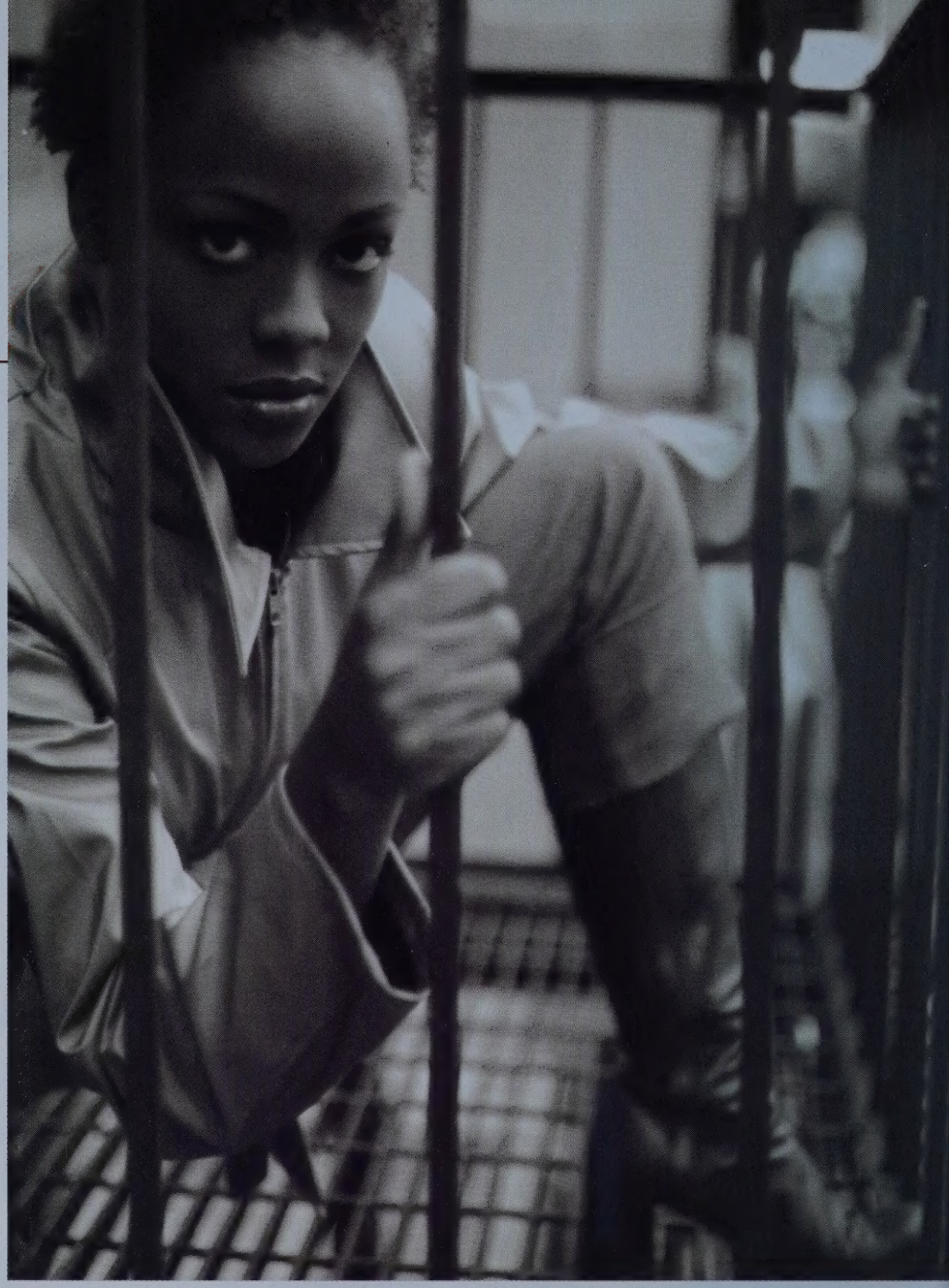
Sex Talk

Q: Dear Geanie,
I don't seem to get aroused until I've hurt my partner's feelings. I'm not proud of this at all. I've got this really unpleasant way of coming off to her when she tries to get close. I can't seem to just go with the romantic flow. That seems so boring to me. Wine and roses, dinner and soft music just annoy me to no end. How predictable! I feel like I'm being set up. I'm much more spontaneous. I'm not very good at hiding my agitated feelings and I'm sure that's a bummer when a person has really tried to create a perfect mood. When my partner finally gets pissed off and storms out, I start heating up! I love it when she's mad. In fact, the madder she is, the better she is in bed. But sometimes during sex she bursts into tears. What's wrong with me?
Signed,
Mad Sex



A: Dear Mad Sex,
I applaud you and respect your courage as you seek clarity for your behavior. As, yours is of serious concern. Therefore, it is very important that I be direct with this issue. The sadistic (deriving pleasure from inflicting pain on others) quality of your sexual relationship is representative of deeper issues within the self. Your sexual behavior may be rooted in how you were, initially, introduced or impacted within the sexual arena. And, it has translated into your "normalcy." Even though a sense of you tells you it is not o.k., you are compelled. And, though it is possible, and equally as impacting, for you to have observed these behaviors, I suspect you have been sexually abused directly. Further, I suspect that you are acting out the experience in the same sadistic, manner in which it occurred. And, that you have taken on the role of the perpetrator. Sex, for you, has no intimacy, rather it is a weapon of power, control, and degradation.

It is important for you to seek professional assistance, as this level of sadism has more far reaching consequences. There is a level of mild sadism within the realm of what the general populace considers "normal." This "normal limit" may be identified in behaviors such as a mild spank on the rear or, perhaps, a slight pinch of the breast. However, one has passed the boundaries when behaviors become psychologically and/or physically damaging. In your case, your excitement increases in direct correlation to increased pain, indicating the possibility of loss of control of the self, hence, rage.

Within this concern, the possible range of behaviors could break skin, draw blood, initiate rape, and/or rageful violence which may, possibly, lead to death. In the world of sado-masochism (pleasure in giving and receiving pain), sexual behaviors causing death are called "snuffing." Yes, there are myriad negative consequences. It is imperative that you, as well as your partner, seek out a professional. And, within this journey, the two of you may discover what a truly loving and satisfying sexual relationship looks and feels like.
Journey with courage.

Geanie Bond is licensed marriage and family therapist practicing in Atlanta, GA. She specializes in hypnosis and sex therapy and be reached at 404.256.6709. Email your questions to SexTalk@venusmagazine.com.

Cosmic Rhythms

by Joy Isoke, *Intuitive Astrologer*

Conscious Relationships

As an Astrologer, I have come to see the importance of knowing ourselves and knowing whom we take as a partner. Too often, we involve ourselves in relationships based upon passionate sex and intrigue. Through exposure, it is only a matter of time before we realize we have no idea who the person is with whom we have just bought that house. Of course, I am being extreme to make a point.

As I have stated in previous articles, the 21st century is about relationships. We have at our disposal ways to get to know each other to alleviate or minimize later disappointments.

In Conscious Relationship Astrology, the birth charts of two individuals are examined to determine the needs and desires within intimate relationships. Such as, 'What is the instinctual nature of each person--monogamous or polygamous?' After the two individual charts are analyzed, two comparison charts are done to see what each person brings to the life of her significant other. Finally, a composite of both birth charts is created to blend the energy of both persons. This creates the synergy of your relationship. The composite chart is an excellent way to see the compatibility, the theme, the challenges and rewards within your relationship.

The purpose of this art is to create conscious individuals who choose their relationships with open eyes and open hearts. There is no room for blame or deception in conscious relationships. Each person is enlightened as to the reality of his partnership. The challenge for the conscious couple is choice. The couple may choose to work with the combined energy (synergy) or not.

By taking the time to be honest with yourself and your partner, you can eliminate unnecessary grief and misery. This takes courage, my friends. Some of us do not want to be aware and conscious. We do not want the responsibility of conscious choices. We would rather drift along counting our wounds and broken hearts. Conscious relationships challenge the martyr to take a real stand in his or her own life. Are you ready for a new way to relate? Consider becoming conscious and aware from the beginning and minimizing the delusion and disappointment in the end. Your personal dignity and integrity are worth this and more.

Q. We are considering buying a home together, but we are afraid to make the commitment. In what way can Conscious Relationship Astrology help us? W.S., Texas

A. Conscious Relationship Astrology will reveal your core issues regarding stability and commitment. Buying a home together is much like 'jumping over the broomstick' because the commitment feels final. If you are reluctant, I suggest you p-a-u-s-e and become conscious of your needs and fears so you may proceed with honesty and awareness.

Q. My partner does not feel comfortable with my spiritual beliefs. We seem to differ in our philosophies. Is our relationship destined to fail? C. B., Seattle

A. No. By being conscious and respectful of each other, you can build a life together. Spiritual compatibility is very important, because what we're speaking about is the essence of our very lives. Respect for each person's spiritual belief must be mutual. It is unhealthy to disregard your inner spirit in favor of a love of interest.

Astrology Research Project

Volunteers are needed to assist in a research project on Astrology & Homosexuality. You must be homosexual or bisexual to participate. I am researching whether astrology can be used to determine homosexuality. You will receive your Birth Chart and an Astrological Profile free of charge. Interested? Please send birth data (date, time, place) and mailing address to: Joy Isoke, Intuitive Astrologer P.O. Box 9481, Scottsdale, AZ 85252-9481 or e-mail: JIIA@juno.com Tel: 480.949.0022

Eric: Shirt & Pants - Brooks Brothers / Daniel: Pants - Everett Hall , Shirt - McGregor

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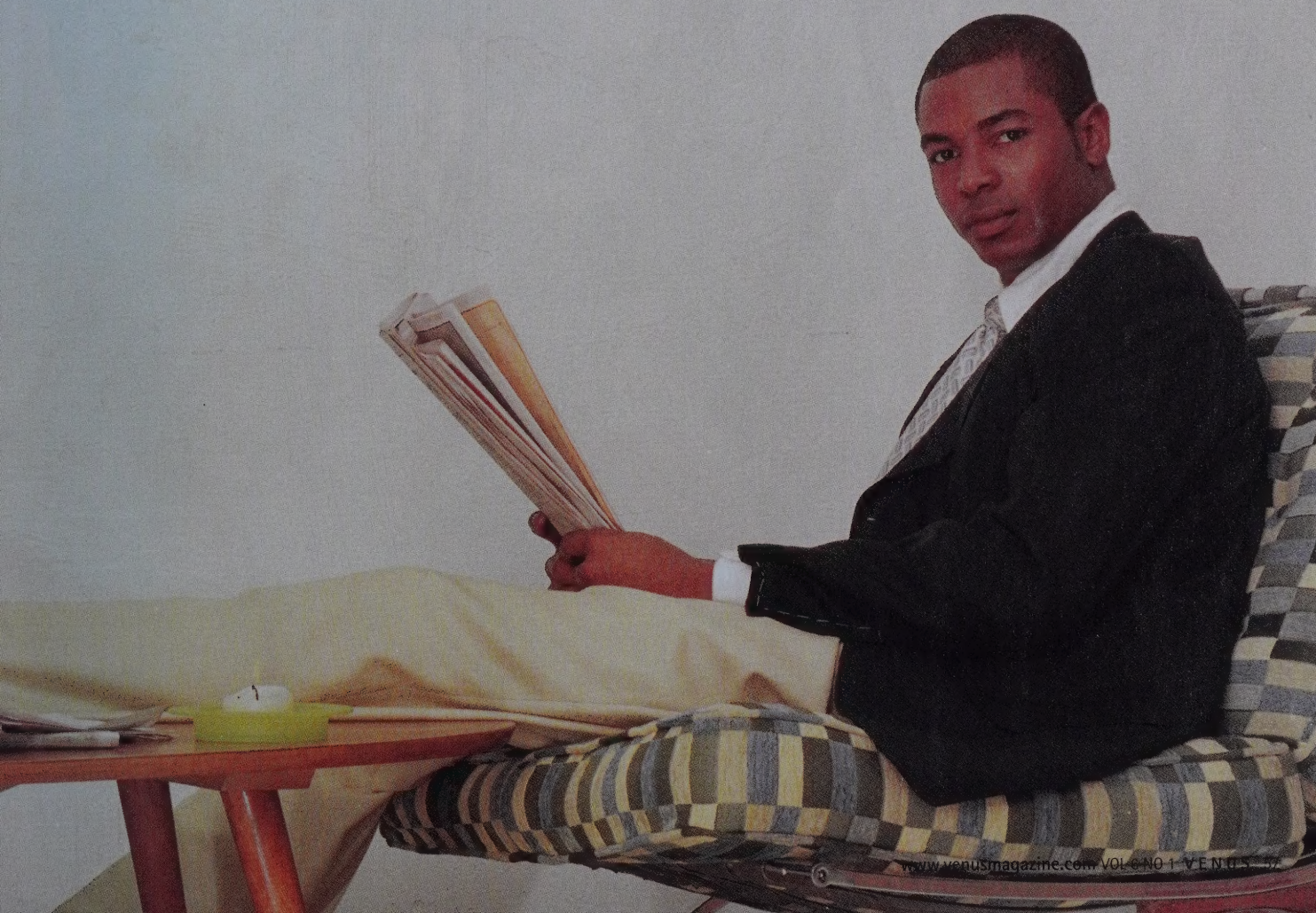

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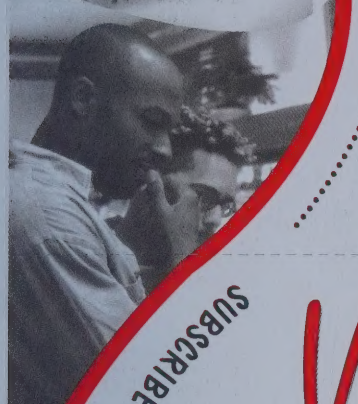

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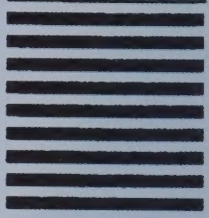

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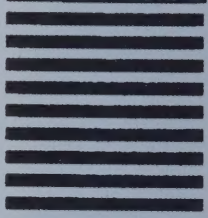

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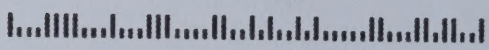

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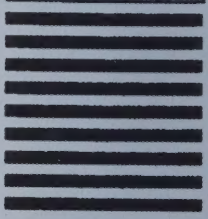

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Lawrence Fishburne's Directorial Debut

Laurence Fishburne joins Hollywood's newly esteemed writer-director ranks as the writer and director of his first feature. The acclaimed actor will also star in Once in A Life, a film he developed with producer Holen Sugland, who helped bring Hoodlun to the screen, fromFishburne's play of the same name. Life follows two estranged brothers who have little in common except for their lives in crime on the streets of New York.

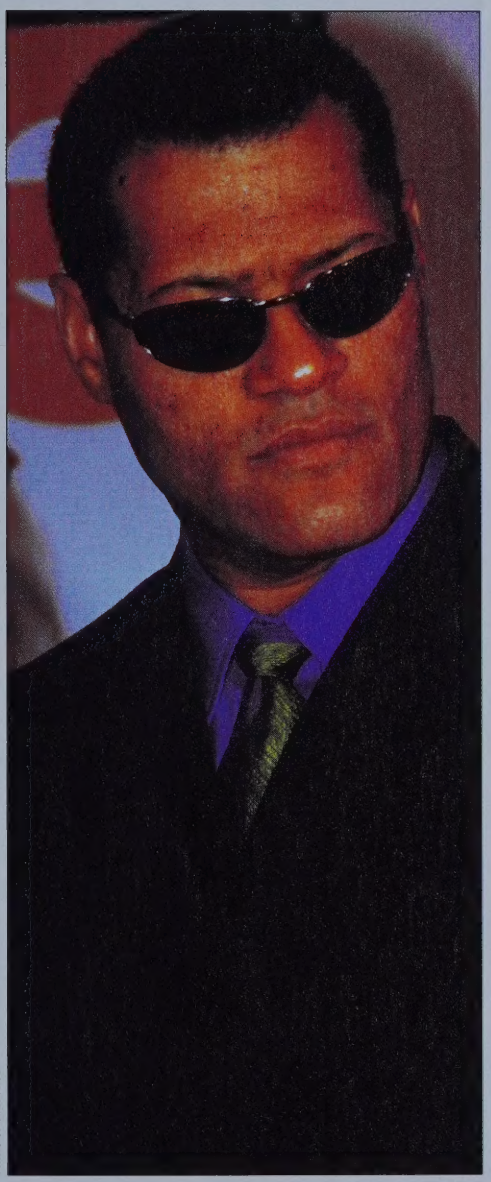
When Mike (Fishburne) plans a heist of heroin from a local dealer, he enlists his brother Torch, who gets shot when the deal goes bad. Holed up in an abandonned building the brothers reevaluate their life choices and their relationship as Torch's condition worsens. When help arrives in the form of Mike's former partner, Tony, the brothers believe he can save them but learn that Tony may not be their hero after all. It seems he has his own connection to the cursed package that may cost Torch his life.

Shot in New York a couple of years ago, the gritty, slice-of-street life film also stars Oz's Eamonn Walker, Titus Welliver from Brooklyn South and Waiting to Exhale's Gregory Hines, now making quite a splash as Will's gay boss and possible love interest on Will & Grace.

Born in Augusta, Georgia, and raised in Brooklyn, Fishburne's career began when he lied about his age to make Francis Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now in the Phillipines at 14. The cult television series Pee-Wee's Playhouse put the young star on the map before his breakthrough role as a passionate, concerned father in John Singleton's Boyz in the Hood.

Life follows up Fishburne's work in the box office sensation The Matrix which reignited a career celebrated for his Academy Award-nominated portrayal of Sly Stone in What's Love Got to Do With It? op posite the electrifying Angela Bassett. Later this year, Fishburne begins work on the two back-to-back Matrix sequels set to begin filming in London with Keanu Reeves.

--Anderson Jones



PHTHO BY TINA PAUL

Maysa Leak

By Nigel Jackson

All My Life Is the title of the much anticipated follow-up to the 1995 release, *Maysa* which included the international hit singles "What About Our Love" and "Good-bye," which is dedicated to the memory of her dearest inspiration--her Father. All My Life is a deeply rich, silky soft, soul stirring collection. "Sunshine," "Earth Child," and Maysa's wall banging cover of Gil Scott Heron's classic "The Bottle," make this CD a smash.

Maysa Leak, a native of Baltimore, first dreamed of singing at the age of six. She recalls her mother taking her to see the hit play "Purlie," starring Melba Moore. Melba's stunning performance inspired little Maysa to pursue a spot in the light. Big shout out to Melba Moore for the inspiration, music wouldn't be the same without Maysa.

Her definitive vocal stylings caught the ear of one of Maysa's heroes, Stevie Wonder. After she auditioned for him, he was so impressed that he assured her a spot in Wonder Love after her graduation. Maysa remembers how challenging and fun it was watching him give out all the parts to the singers. "We had to get it on the first go," she said. "He would play or sing a part only once, and we had to sing it the next time around in harmony with everyone else."

Regarding her transition, the singer said, "Wonder Love to Incognito.wasn't easy at all. I was new and wasn't on retainer so while Stevie was not touring or recording I taught voice, worked in a music store, and a department Store." British producer Steve Harvey owed her money for a recording session, so one day Maysa "tracked him down and when I caught up with him he didn't have the money, but he said he could get me an audition with a jazz band in London that was looking for a vocalist. I auditioned over the phone, singing Stevie Wonder's 'Don't You Worry 'Bout A Thing.' When I was done all I heard over the phone was he would be in touch. One hour later, the group's manager called me back and offered me the job."

With Maya as lead singer, Incognito exploded worldwide. The group churned out hits such as like "Still a Friend of Mine" and "Deep Waters." It's evident that destiny holds the key to this Baltimore beauty's fate. A gifted angel, Maysa's spirit is as huge as her voice and her love is as far reaching as her range.

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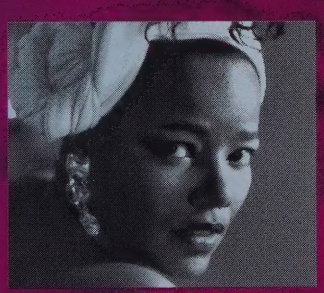

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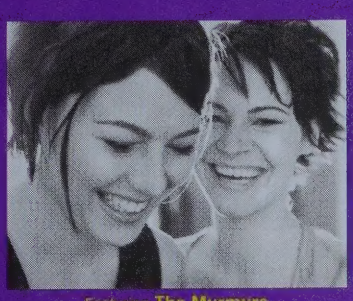

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Include your name, address and daytime phone number for confir mation. We reserve the right to edit correspondence for clarity and space.

Q Tip is on the Tip

According to my sources Q Tip and Mariah Carey (bad boy and goody two shoes) hooked up for a night of elegance, passion and flames but all she got was pure "Yo Boy Thug Luv." This is not new for the Q. He has been known to turn 'em out. And lately its been MS Janet Jackson, although its too soon to tell how serious. The two have been seen on numerous occassions in and around town.

Stop Baby Love!

Earlier this year it was announced that the legendary Diana Ross & the Supremes were reuniting. According to the Motown Alumni Association, the reunion deal may not happen. Things were all good until Mary Wilson learned that Diana Ross not only invited her and former Supreme Cindy Birdsong, but all 7 living Supremes to perform at the proposed Supremes reunion. Wilson and Birdsong recently ceased negotiations with Diana Ross for this reunion. Other members of the Supremes included Jean Terrell, Lynda Laurence, Scherrie Payne and Susaye Greene. On the other hand, it's true, Michael Jackson is planning on calling it quits.

Free from Puffy

Tonya Blount "Through The Rain" and "Sister Act 2" is now free from the clutches of Sean Puffy Combs. According to sources Tonya Blounts CD was scheduled for release last March 99 and for some reason has been pushed back for release in March 2000. Tonya protested and just before she could file papers, Puffy ripped up the contract. Tonya is currently shopping a new deal and has not ruled out releasing it herself.

Superstar Mom

Millini Khan, daughter of Super Soul Diva Chaka Khan and Damien Desandis, son of Legendary Crooner Michael Henderson are currently finishing up their much anticipated CD. Millini didn't always want to sing, she resented the absence of her Superstar Mom, and blamed it on the music. That's all changed now, she fully supports her Mom and helps her in anyway she can. Millini is also a mother and her daughter, Raven's arrival was so special, that Chaka named her company, "Raven Productions." Raven makes it known that she is the president and according to Millini, Raven sings, dancse and acts!

Foxy Brown gets DISSED

Hard-core Rapper and past love interest, Kurupt lets Foxy Brown, DMX and some members of the Ruff Ryders (not including EVE) have it on his single entitled "Calling Out Names." He truley went for the jugular and Foxy's unbelievable weave. According to inside sources DMX just couldn't' resist Foxy's Ill NA NA. DMX shares the spotlight with Aaliyah in the movie "Romeo Must Die" just released.

Lil'Him?

Lil' Him and the Hip Huggers" are believed to be the culprits responsible for the delay in the release of Lil' Kim's new CD. My inside sources tell me that boot leg copies of the CD hit the streets and the word on the street is, 'it sounded like Lil' Him instead of Lil' Kim.'

Find Your Go-Go Boots!

Diana Ross & The Supremes, Mary Wilson and Cindy Birdsong are planning a reunion tour! No details yet but we'll keep ya posted!

Photography: Jeffrey Gamble
Hair: Darryle Bennett
Make Up: Monifa Mortis
Food Prop Stylist: Susan Ottaviano

10 Dining Etiquette Tips to Impress Your Host

Whether you're dining with family or with business associates, making a good impression is a requisite for success. Unfortunately for many, poor manners and disrespect have created a crisis of degenerating civility. Knowing the basics of protocol will help you succeed in almost any environment - business or social. For this reason, we have prepared the following list of 10 tips for avoiding dining faux pas:

1. No "Napkin Origami" please. Don't mistake your folded napkin creation for a centerpiece. Always place it in your lap after the host or guest of honor has placed his/her own napkin. Never shake it out, snap it or use it as a handkerchief.

2. It isn't "first come, first served." Always be patient and wait until everyone has been served. A common and embarrassing mistake is to start eating before the host or hostess has had a chance to say grace or present a toast.

3. Bend at the knees. Always stand-up when anyone approaches your table or new guests are seated. The La-Z-Boy syndrome indicates that you simply cannot be bothered to stand-up and is a sure way to make any guest feel unwelcome.

4. Don't be a food critic. This is especially true when you are a guest, as it can be insulting to your host or hostess. Also, never address your server as boy, son, honey, garcon or dear.

5. Add salt or insult? Never season your food before tasting it. Seasoning your food will show a lack of confidence in the chef and is a surefire way to insult your host.

6. Soak in the toast mentally not physically. Never drink to a toast given to you. This is akin to patting yourself on the back. Instead, politely acknowledge the toast and thank the speaker once he or she has finished the toast.

7. Messy Marvin should be neither seen nor heard. Slurping, smacking or otherwise eating food in a noticeably audible or visible manner is never pleasant for those who are present. Also, never talk with food in your mouth or on your utensil. The last thing you want to do is eject food at the person to whom you are speaking.

8. Let it ring, let it ring, let it ring. Avoid taking calls during meals, particularly on cell phones. Accepting calls while in the company of guests serves as a veritable slap in the face. If you absolutely must take a call, kindly excuse yourself away from the table.

9. No poking unless choking. In most cases, dislodging stubborn food particles from your teeth is forbidden at the table. Discretion is key so excuse yourself and leave the room. Picking with any implement whether it's a napkin, toothpick, finger or dental floss can repulse your dining companions.

10. And ALWAYS remember to thank the host or hostess. Showing gratitude is the key to being a gracious guest. A handshake and a polite "thank you" provide a sufficient close to the occasion.

Contact:

Corpedia Training Technologies
Sally Riedel, Director of Marketing
Phone: (877) 629-8724
E-mail: sriedel@corpedia.com

About Corpedia:

Corpedia is based in Phoenix, AZ and offers both CD-ROM and Web-based training in legal basics; management, communication and professional success skills; and workplace safety. The company's website is http://www.corpedia.com.

L.-Suit Giorgio Armani, shirt Gerald Tomez, shoes Bally; Daniel-jacket Smuggler ,shirt Brooks Brothers,tie Gene Meyer, pants Everett Hall, shoes Bally; Stacie-suit Brooks Brothers, shirt Gerald Tomez, shoes Bally; Eric-suit Brooks Brothers, shirt Brooks Brothers, tie Zanetti, shoes Bally

we all have a stake in justice

By Rebeca Toledo

The case of Mumia Abul-Jamal demonstrates everything that is wrong with the so-called "justice" system in the US. This is the same system whose police raid LGBTST bars and brutalize and kill people of color; whose courts sanction gay- and trans-bashing and murders by giving a slap on the wrist to gay-bashers. When was the last time you saw a jury of your LGBTST and people-of-color peers?

In 1982, Mumia was convicted for the murder of a white police officer in Philadelphia and sentenced to death. But as former political prisoner Rubin "Hurricane" Carter says, "Jailhouse stool pigeons, jury tampering, jury fixing, paid criminals for perjured testimonies, the manufacturing of evidence by police departments, the lies in the seat of government–that's what Mumia Abul- Jamal is in prison for. That's what I was in prison for."

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former member of the Black Panther Party, was also a radio journalist who exposed racism and police brutality. Elected to be president of the Association of Black Journalists in Philadelphia, he was known as the "voice of the voiceless."

Former political prisoner Angela Davis, poet June Jordan and author Alice Walker, in a recent article in the magazine "The Nation," called for broad support to win a new trial for Mumia. In their editorial, the three concluded, "We can win. We can do this. We can keep him alive. He must not die."

Angela Davis had met with Mumia in prison on Oct. 12, the day before Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge signed his death warrant. Ridge was forced to stay the execution two weeks later due to mass pressure.

Mumia has been a strong proponent of the LGBTST communities. In a statement from death row, he said, "The sickening attacks on gay people in cities across the nation recently is a reflection of the sickness that simmers at the core of the American soul. Is it a coincidence that Richmond, the city where a Black man was burned to death and decapitated, follows severamonths later with the decapitation and torture of a gay man? I think not. This cruel and savage violence must be stopped–but it won't be the cops that stop it. The people are the solution!"

Rainbow Flags for Mumia is part of that solution. We are a coalition of over 200 organizations and individuals from the lesbian, gay, bi, two-spirit, and trans communities. Some endorsers include African Ancestral Lesbians United for Societal Change, NYC; The Black Lesbian and Gay Task Force, Milwaukee; Lesbian and Gay Insurrection (LAGAI) San Francisco, CA; The National Latina/o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Organization; Pride At Work; Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries, NYC & CA; Students and Youth to Stop the Execution of Mumia (S.Y.S.T.E.M) Philadelphia; PAT-People (Sponsors of the Seattle Trans Pride 99).

Over 1,000 multi-racial LGBTST's marched in Philadelphia & San Francisco at the April 24 Millions for Mumia demonstrations. We organized support for Mumia during Pride celebrations across the country, including Black Pride events. We had a Chicana speaker at Queens Pride in New York. On July 3-4th in Philadelphia, Rainbow Flags, along with the Simon Nkoli Queer Crusaders for Mumia, participated in a mass civil disobedience and rally at the Liberty Bell.

Martin Luther King III, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference recently said, "Conscious compels me to unite...with millions of others around the globe to fight for the life of our brother in "the struggle," Mumia Abu-Jamal.

I do not believe it is incidental that I find myself protesting for the life of this innocent man, one month after my family and I received the verdict from a multicultural jury that said my father's assassination was part of a conspiracy. Martin Luther King, Jr. was brutally murdered because he spoke out against social injustices."

Mumia's case is now at its most critical stage. Federal District Court Justice William H. Yohn is reviewing Mumia's petition for Habeas Corpus relief based on allegations of 29 constitutional violations. This is Mumia's final legal avenue and will determine whether or not he is granted a new trial.

All briefs are to be in by April 2, after which time Judge Yohn will set a court date. Supporters of Mumia will be packing the court that day to apply "people's pressure." Mumia himself will be present.

The conspiracy to execute Mumia Abu-Jamal is so big, that to place all our hope for his release in the same corrupt, racist, political machine that has held him captive for eighteen years is to sentence him to death. Without a broad, multi-racial campaign Mumia will never find justice in the courts and will never be freed.

Let's all stand up against injustice by demanding a new and fair trail for Mumia. We can strike a blow at the same forces that want to push the LGBTST and people-of-color communities back. Make it a point to be at Madison Square Garden on April 29th!

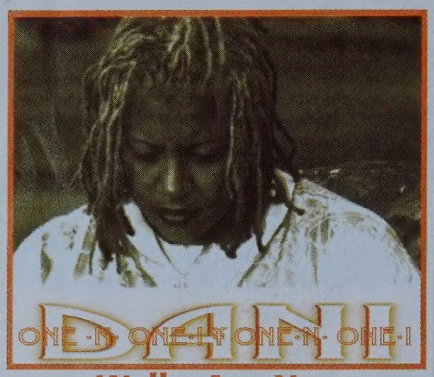
For more information and to get involved: Rainbow Flags for Mumia, 39 W14th Street, NY, NY 10011, 212-633-6646, rainbows4mumia@hotmail.com.

For The Cause

Madison Square Garden Theatre, Saturday, April 29–you and your friends are coming out to demand justice for Mumia Abul-Jamal!

Thousands of people from around the world and the country will converge on New York City to make history. Madison Square Garden has never played host to the cause of a political prisoner on death row. For more information call 212-633-6646 or e-mail: rainbows4mumia@hotmail.com.

So U Haven't Gotten a Hold of DANI Yet



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Millenium Calender

APRIL 2000

Millennium Conference
Black Queer Studies in the Millenium will be held at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on *April 7 - 9, 2000.* Film screenings of Watermelon Woman and Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis at 100, special performance of one-man show, "Strange Fruit." For more information, please contact E. Patrick Johnson at ejohn29@aol.com or 919-962-4944 or visit www.unc.edu/~epjohnso.bqs.html.MoonSisters DrumCamp for womyn and girls, April 7 & 8, 2000. Send sase to P.O. Box 20918 Oakland, CA 94620 510-547-8386,

Unity Conference
Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays Unity Conference. 312-409-4917 for info.

Business Expo
The 8th National Gay & Lesbian Business Expo, will kick off at NYC's Jacob Javits Convention Center, NYC call 800-243-9774 for info.

Youth Pride
The 5th Annual Youth Pride Day will take place April 15, 2000 in DuPont Cir. Washington, DC 202-588-8008, or www.youthpridedc.org for info.

"Splash"
Get wet at "Splash" Weekend in Houston. Black Gay Pride, Texas style. 713-942-CLUB for info.

Real/Reel Black
African-American lesbian, Ashara Ekudayo and her agency, Pan African Arts Society ,(PAAS), organizes Real/Reel Black: Denver Pan African Film Festival April 27-30th, 2000. Tickets are $7.00 (except for Opening and Closing Night) and $6.00 for students and Senior Citizens. Contact the Denver Film Society for more information at(303)595-3456 or (303)298-1544 or visit the project's web site atwww.denverfilm.org.

MAY 2000

Bayard Rustin Breakfast
The 10th Annual Bayard Rustin Breakfast is sponsored by AIDS Action of Boston. Call for info and tickets 617-450-1644.

DC Pride
Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day, Memorial Day Weekend Washington D.C. www.blackpride.com for the latest.

Los Angeles Celebration
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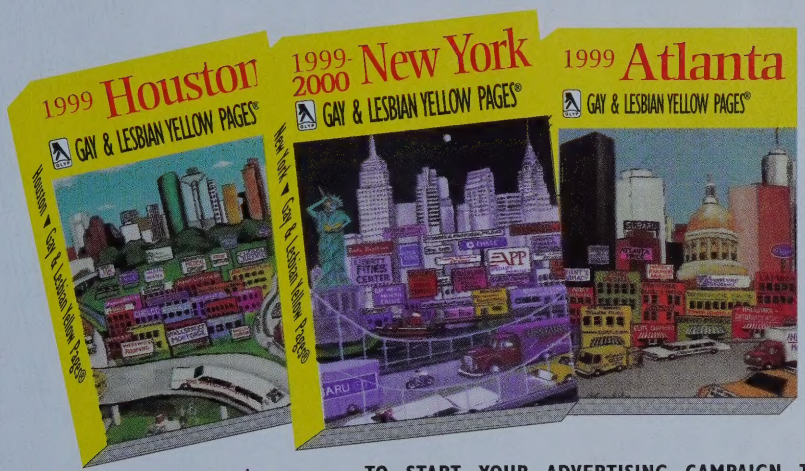

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Until Death Do You Part?

by Gaylon B. Roberson

Despite the negativity, it's actually a good time to be gay. The "alternative lifestyle" has become more acceptable. And yes, many are still hating on those who choose whom they want to be with and love, but people are becoming more tolerant of the different lives others lead. If you don't think "we've come a long way, baby," then check out the latest political coup de theatres. Domestic partnership benefits are being extended to lesbian and gay couples. Openly visible are advertisements expressing same sex love, such as those for American Express, Budweiser and Subaru. In "Boys Town" on North Halsted in Chicago, pride pillars symbolizing the "gay thang" are on every other corner.

Where do we go from here? What's the next item on the agenda? What's the next fight? Quiet as it's kept, same sex marriages (or holy commitments) are on the horizon. Although gay couples do get married in their own private ceremonies, we will soon see the legalization of these unions. There will be no need to hide. Wedding invitations for Bob and John or Mary and Jane are going to end up in a lot more mailboxes. Still, regardless of acceptance, I'm not feeling this vibe. I do support same sex love, but I would have to stop the buck at the holy commitment stuff. I don't believe in same sex "holy unions" any more than I believe in heterosexual marriages.

My previous marriage to a man proved to me that you don't have to marry the people you're in love with. What I learned from that union is that legalities are null and void when it comes to true commitment. I'd rather have an open level of trust, honesty, and respect than a ring that's supposed to represent those virtues.

So, what's up with the marriage thing?

A wedding dress? Please! All the holy unions in the world couldn't keep two "love birds" together--if they really wanted to part. In fact, the melodrama of it all might encourage us to get hitched so we can break up. Break up to make up. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Somehow it makes the sex better. Furthermore, marriage and ceremonies make strange bedfellows. Do we really get a kick out of throwing lavish parties we can't afford in outfits we'll never wear again, only to be pissed at our significant others for their antics two years later?

Still, your thang is your thang. If you want to take those steps to conform to society's norms and standards of happiness, more power to ya! I just can't understand the point of proving your love and commitment to another person through "unions" when your love should be proved through your actions. Maybe the dissolution of my marriage has tarnished my thinking? Hmm, I do know the ring I wore didn't keep either of us devoted.

Okay ... you may argue that same sex couples want to share their happiness with friends and family. Then what are barbecues and cocktail parties for? Engaging in so-called vows while exchanging bands of gold is phony and intrusive. Do I really need eyes staring down my throat as I declare my love and promise to obey and cherish? Only my significant other and I know whether it's constant or not. Is saying vows in the presence of the Lord more convincing? We break vows everyday without regard to the sin.

Yes, some "total" togetherness works. I've seen it. But I don't count my grandparent's relationship because that era is beyond my realm of thought. Who stays together for over fifty years anymore? As far as I can see, my best friend's marriage seems okay. But I've watched the sacrifices she's made to be married and raise children. And is she really still in love? The little old white couple upstairs from me is still coupling, as well as my married neighbors down the hall. I know nothing is perfect. Everyone goes through relationship difficulties. Trust me, I've listened for crashing plates to hit the door, to no avail. My neighbors must be happy, right?

Still, wouldn't it be the same if my married neighbors were simply lovers, partners and companions raising their offspring? Maybe. Maybe not. What I do know is that no legal union is keeping them together. Their love, respect, trust, honesty and passion for one another is. Who needs society to validate our relationships? What's really the point? A ring on the finger or love in the heart?

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Valerie instructed her assistant, "If Natasha calls, give her the cell phone number, but if it's some woman named Cheryl...voicemail."

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CRIXIVAN in combination with antiretroviral agents is a powerful protease inhibitor that fights HIV and is among the preferred treatments for HIV in federal healthcare guidelines.[1] CRIXIVAN can help reduce the chance of illnesses and death associated with HIV; CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 T-cell count, as shown in studies over a one-year period. Some patients may not experience these effects. CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS.

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In a landmark study, over 90% of 31 patients receiving a combination of CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC reduced their serum viral load below the limit of detection after 24 weeks. Importantly, the limited number of patients who chose to stay with the study for longer periods of time maintained these results through the one-year mark. In a separate study, 30% of 261 patients receiving dual therapy of CRIXIVAN and AZT had serum viral loads below the limit of detection at 48 weeks. In another landmark study, 43% of 40 patients receiving combination therapy with CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC had plasma viral loads below the limit of detection at 40 weeks. In this study of over 1,000 patients, the group of patients receiving CRIXIVAN along with 3TC and AZT achieved a reduction in deaths and AIDS-defining illnesses over those taking 3TC and AZT alone. Overall, the number of deaths was inadequate to assess the impact of CRIXIVAN on survival. Blood viral loads were measured by available tests and the virus may still be present in other organ systems.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CRIXIVAN

CRIXIVAN can be taken with a light meal or on an empty stomach. Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN may develop kidney stones. For some, this can lead to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure. Drinking at least 6 glasses of water each day may help reduce the chance of forming a kidney stone. Other side effects reported include rapid breakdown of red blood cells and liver problems.

As with other protease inhibitors, changes in body fat, increased bleeding in some patients with hemophilia, and increased blood sugar levels or diabetes have been reported. Additionally, severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients also taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins." There are some common medications and AIDS-related medications you should not take with CRIXIVAN. Discuss all medications you are taking or plan to take with your doctor.

For more detailed information about CRIXIVAN, please read the information immediately following this advertisement.

[1] Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in HIV-Infected Adults and Adolescents. Panel on Clinical Practices for Treatment of HIV Infection, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), May 5, 1999.

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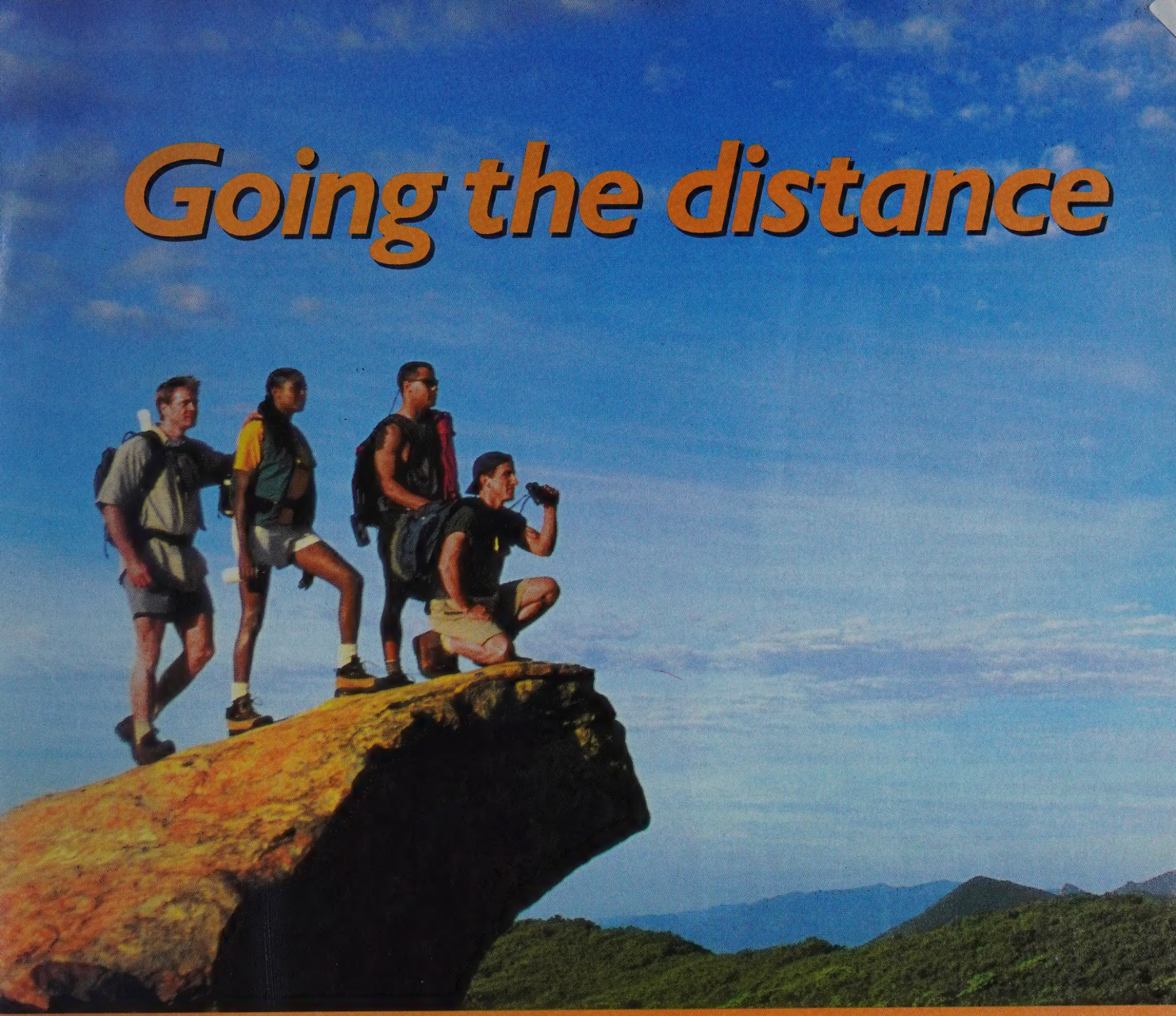

Remember to ask your doctor about CRIXIVAN.

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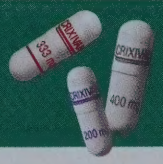

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Patient Information about CRIXIVAN* (KRIK-sih-van)

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
Generic name: indinavir (in-DIH-nuh-veer) sulfate

9024510

Please read this information before you start taking CRIXIVAN. Also, read the leaflet each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss CRIXIVAN when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when using CRIXIVAN and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

What is CRIXIVAN?

CRIXIVAN is an oral capsule used for the treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). CRIXIVAN is a type of HIV drug called a protease (PRO-tee-ase) inhibitor.

How does CRIXIVAN work?

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

CRIXIVAN is usually prescribed with other anti-HIV drugs such as ZDV (also called AZT), 3TC, ddI, ddC, or d4T. CRIXIVAN works differently from these other anti-HIV drugs. Talk with your doctor about how you should take CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN has been studied in adults. The safety and effectiveness of CRIXIVAN in children and adolescents have not been established.

How should I take CRIXIVAN?

There are six important things you must do to help you benefit from CRIXIVAN:

1. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every day as prescribed by your doctor.** Continue taking CRIXIVAN unless your doctor tells you to stop. Take the exact amount of CRIXIVAN that your doctor tells you to take, right from the very start. To help make sure you will benefit from CRIXIVAN, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays". If you don't take CRIXIVAN as prescribed, the activity of CRIXIVAN may be reduced (due to resistance).
2. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every 8 hours around the clock, *every day.*** It may be easier to remember to take CRIXIVAN if you take it at the same time every day. If you have questions about when to take CRIXIVAN, your doctor or health care provider can help you decide what schedule works for you.
3. **If you miss a dose by more than 2 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.** However, if you miss a dose by less than 2 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of CRIXIVAN at any one time.
4. **Take CRIXIVAN with water.** You can also take CRIXIVAN with other beverages such as skim or non-fat milk, juice, coffee, or tea.
5. **Ideally, take each dose of CRIXIVAN without food but with water at least one hour before or two hours after a meal.** Or you can take CRIXIVAN with a light meal. Examples of light meals include:

   dry toast with jelly, juice, and coffee (with skim or non-fat milk and sugar if you want)
   corn flakes with skim or non-fat milk and sugar

   Do not take CRIXIVAN at the same time as any meals that are high in calories, fat, and protein (for example — a bacon and egg breakfast). When taken at the same time as CRIXIVAN, these foods can interfere with CRIXIVAN being absorbed into your bloodstream and may lessen its effect.
6. **It is critical that you drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquids (preferably water) throughout the day, every day. CRIXIVAN can cause kidney stones.** Having enough fluids in your body should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Does CRIXIVAN cure HIV or AIDS?

CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CRIXIVAN may still develop infections or other conditions associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. Although CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS, CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses, including death, associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

Does CRIXIVAN reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

CRIXIVAN has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take CRIXIVAN?

Do not take CRIXIVAN if you have had a serious allergic reaction to CRIXIVAN or any of its components.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while you are taking CRIXIVAN. We do not yet know how CRIXIVAN affects pregnant women or their developing babies.
- You are breast-feeding. You should stop breast-feeding if you are taking CRIXIVAN.

Also talk to your doctor if you have:

- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease caused by cirrhosis.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Diabetes
- Hemophilia
- High cholesterol and you are taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins".

Tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking or plan to take, including non-prescription medicines.

Can CRIXIVAN be taken with other medications?**

Drugs you should not take with CRIXIVAN:

SELDANE® (terfenadine)	HISMANAL® (astemizole)
VERSED® (midazolam)	HALCION® (triazolam)
PROPULSID® (cisapride)	Ergot medications (e.g., Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

Taking CRIXIVAN with the above medications could result in serious or life-threatening problems (such as irregular heartbeat or excessive sleepiness).

In addition, you should not take CRIXIVAN with rifampin, known as RIFADIN®, RIFAMATE®, RIFATER®, or RIMACTANE®.

Drugs you can take with CRIXIVAN include:

RETROVIR® (zidovudine, ZDV also called AZT)	EPIVIR™ (lamivudine, 3TC)
ZERIT® (stavudine, d4T)	isoniazid (INH)
BACTRIM®/SEPTRA® (trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole)	DIFLUCAN® (fluconazole)
BIAXIN® (clarithromycin)	ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35® (oral contraceptive)
TAGAMET® (cimetidine)	Methadone

VIDEX® (didanosine, ddI) — If you take CRIXIVAN with VIDEX®, take them at least one hour apart.

MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin) — If you take CRIXIVAN with MYCOBUTIN®, your doctor may adjust both the dose of MYCOBUTIN and the dose of CRIXIVAN.

NIZORAL® (ketoconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with NIZORAL®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

RESCRIPTOR® (delavirdine) — If you take CRIXIVAN with RESCRIPTOR®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

SPORANOX® (itraconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with SPORANOX®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

SUSTIVA™ (efavirenz) — If you take CRIXIVAN with SUSTIVA™, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

Talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of CRIXIVAN?

Like all prescription drugs, CRIXIVAN can cause side effects. The following is **not** a complete list of side effects reported with CRIXIVAN when taken either alone or with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN developed kidney stones. In some of these patients this led to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure or inflammation of the kidneys. Drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) each day should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had rapid breakdown of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia) which in some cases was severe or resulted in death.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had liver problems including liver failure and death. Some patients had other illnesses or were taking other drugs. It is uncertain if CRIXIVAN caused these liver problems.

Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors. In some of these patients, this led to ketoacidosis, a serious condition caused by poorly controlled blood sugar. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients required adjustments to their diabetes medication. Others needed new diabetes medication.

In some patients with hemophilia, increased bleeding has been reported.

Severe muscle pain and weakness have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors, including CRIXIVAN, together with some of the cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins." Call your doctor if you develop severe muscle pain or weakness.

Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking protease inhibitors. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs and arms may also happen. The cause and long term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

Clinical Studies

Increases in bilirubin (one laboratory test of liver function) have been reported in approximately 10% of patients. Usually, this finding has not been associated with liver problems. However, on rare occasions, a person may develop yellowing of the skin and/or eyes.

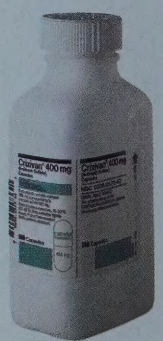
Side effects occurring in 2% or more of patients included: abdominal pain, fatigue or weakness, flank pain, feeling unwell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, acid regurgitation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, back pain, headache, trouble sleeping, dizziness, taste changes, rash, upper respiratory infection, dry skin, and sore throat.

Swollen kidneys due to blocked urine flow occurred rarely.

Marketing Experience

Other side effects reported since CRIXIVAN has been marketed include: allergic reactions; severe skin reactions; yellowing of the skin and/or eyes; heart problems including heart attack; abdominal swelling; indigestion; inflammation of the kidneys; inflammation of the pancreas; joint pain; depression; itching; hives; change in skin color; hair loss; ingrown toenails with or without infection; crystals in the urine; painful urination; and numbness of the mouth.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms. If the condition persists or worsens, seek medical attention.



How should I store CRIXIVAN capsules?

- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules in the bottle they came in and at room temperature (59°- 86°F).
- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules dry by leaving the small desiccant "pillow" in the bottle. Keep the bottle closed.

This medication was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep CRIXIVAN and all medicines out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

This leaflet provides a summary of information about CRIXIVAN. If you have any questions or concerns about either CRIXIVAN or HIV, talk to your doctor.

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West Point, PA 19486, USA

MERCK

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CRIXIVAN®
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules

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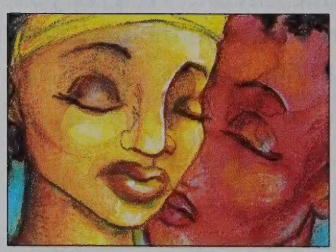

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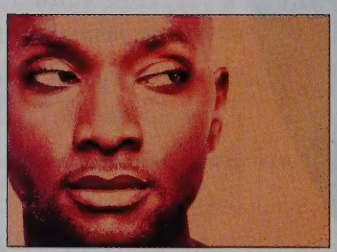
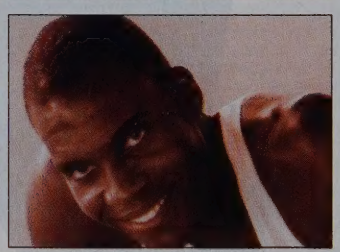


36 Punks
Patrick Ian-Polk, V. P. at "Babyface's" Edmonds Entertainment, discusses his latest movie project.



19 Is He Gay?
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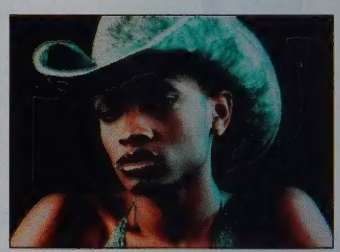
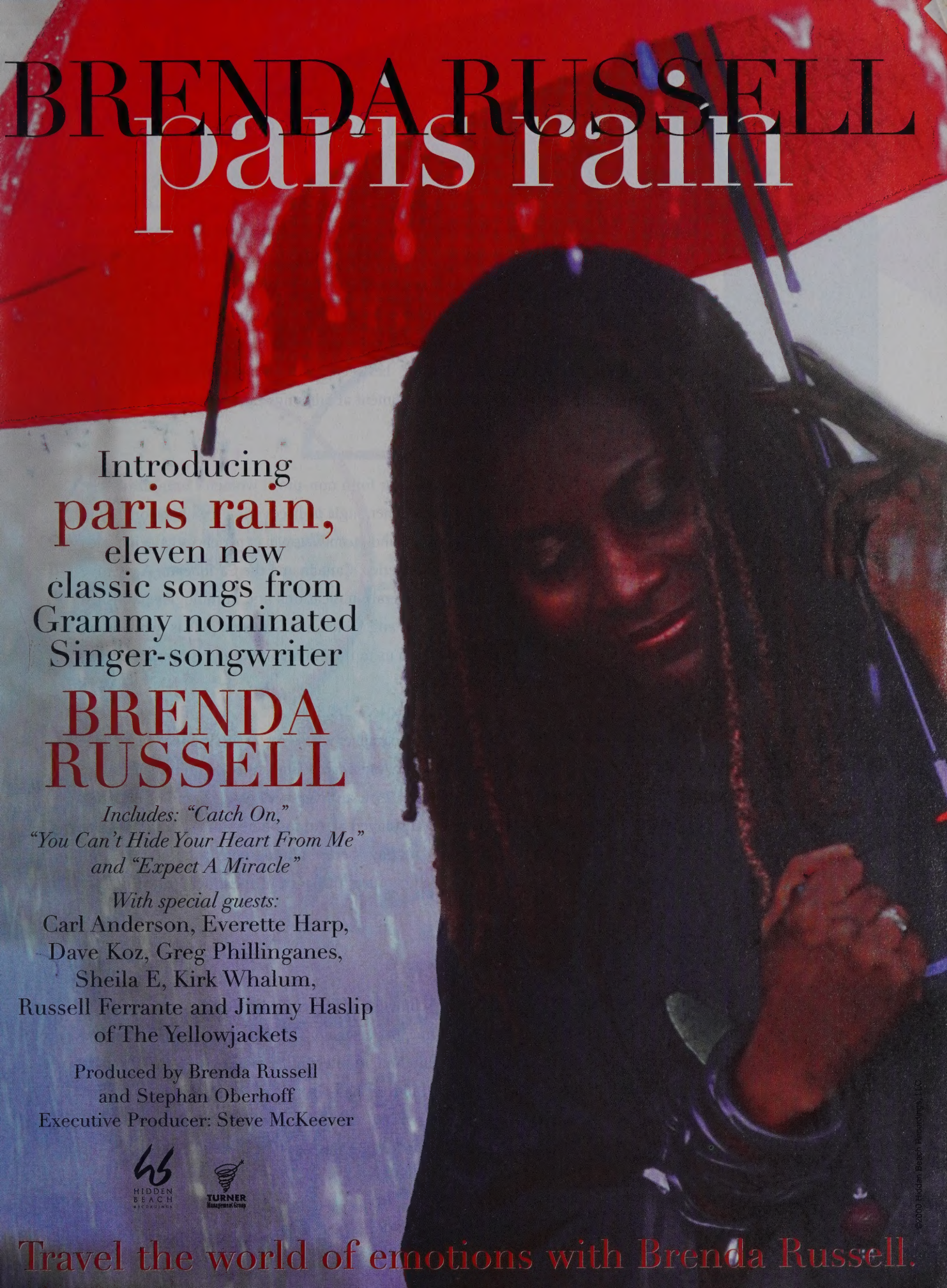


65 Rap Sexy!
Strings gets nasty with the release of 'Black Widow,' her new CD on Keith Sweat's label.

BRENDA RUSSELL
paris rain



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eleven new
classic songs from
Grammy nominated
Singer-songwriter

BRENDA RUSSELL

Includes: "Catch On," "You Can't Hide Your Heart From Me" and "Expect A Miracle"

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Sheila E, Kirk Whalum,
Russell Ferrante and Jimmy Haslip
of The Yellowjackets

Produced by Brenda Russell
and Stephan Oberhoff
Executive Producer: Steve McKeever

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Travel the world of emotions with Brenda Russell.

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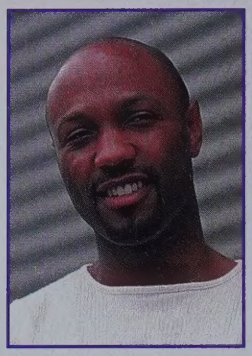
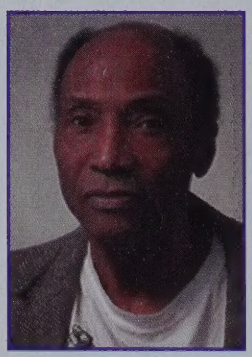


Lincoln Pettaway is a Cleveland, Ohio, native and a University of Rochester graduate with a degree in film and a concentration in African-American studies. In his spare time, Pettaway studies at Cleveland State University where he is an MBA candidate with a concentration in Marketing and E-Commerce. He has written for, The Gay People's Chronicle and is the editor of The Next Level. Pettaway caught up with Patrick-Ian Polk, director of the new film "Punks" between film festivals and his new position as vice president of production and development at Edmonds Entertainment. Polk made time to talk to Venus about his debut film.

Rosalind Lloyd is an events coordinator for a non-profit women's organization in New York City. As travel editor for Venus , her angle is discovering a gay personality in the placestowhich she travels. Her personal and business travel experiences have included traveling to Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Canada and the Caribbean. A creative writer, her work has been included in several publications and anthologies published by Alyson Publications, Arsenal Pulp Press and Simon and Schuster. She is working on her first novel. In this issue Rosalind takes us to the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, and Hawaii.



Hugh Bell is a New York City-based photographer whose career has spanned more than 40 years. He has photographed covers for American Vision, Black Enterprise, Ebony, and Essence , featured in the magazine's 25th anniversary issue. Some of his photographs of jazz legends are currently displayed at Atmosphere Gallery in SoHo. The photographer is planning an exhibit of his gay-themed photographs at his NYC studio-gallery later this year. In this issue, Bell captures the spirit of the Black Pride Circuit.

Jonathan Brooks is a first-time contributor to Venus. He has a degree from the University of Miami in advertising, a fine arts co-major in photography, and a minor in marketing. His studies in graphic design and architecture, and extensive backgrounds in the fashion industry and the music industry have helped to influence his images. "I approach my photography as I do everything else in my life...as art," says the Miami native. He specializes in photographing people. In this issue, he presents denim style for summer.

Heritage of Pride presents

NYC Gay & Lesbian PRIDE 2000

TAKE PRIDE TAKE JOY TAKE ACTION
NEW YORK CITY 2000 GAY & LESBIAN PRIDE

the rally

Sunday, June 18th, 2000
Bryant Park @ 42nd & 6th Ave., 2 pm to 6 pm. For more information, contact: HOPRALLY@yahoo.com

the march

Sunday, June 25th, 2000
5th Ave. (steps off @ 52nd St.)
12 noon to the end. For registration information, contact HOPMARCH@yahoo.com

pridefest

Sunday, June 25th, 2000
Greenwich Village, Washington Street from Christopher to Spring.
11 am to 10:30 pm. For vendor registration, contact: HOPFEST@yahoo.com

dance 14

Sunday, June 25, 2000,
Pier 54 (13th St. @ the Hudson River)
4:30pm-11pm. Fireworks: 10:30pm-11pm,
DJ: David Knapp. For more information, contact: HOPDANCE@yahoo.com

BUD LIGHT
Next Magazine
New York Blade News
Venus
WET International
Roxy NYC
KTU 103.5
HERO Magazine
United Airlines
Exclusive & Official Airlines of NYC's Gay & Lesbian Pride Week 2000
the Advocate
HX Magazine
Leather Pride Night
Fountainhead Spring Water
the village VOICE
Manatus Restaurant
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Tickets: $20 from April 1st to April 30th, available weekends only at the HOP Merchandise table at Christopher and Bleecker Streets. $25 from May 1st to May 31st, $35 from June 1st to June 24th, and $40 on June 25th. On June 18th tickets will be available at the merchandise booths at the Rally in Bryant Park, 2pm to 6pm. Tickets will be on sale only until sold out. NO exceptions will be made. Only a limited number of tickets will be available the day of the event.

Heritage of Pride, NYC,
154 Christopher St. 1D, New York, NY 10014.
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www.nycpride.org

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letters

" Each issue prompted serious discussion, about our lives together and our responsibilities as part of the community."

My New Issue

Thank you for my copy of Venus . I just e-mailed you to subscribe and I received it in the same week. How wonderful is that!!!!! Venus is a very beautiful and thought-provoking magazine. I appreciate it and you. When I finish my B.A. and M.B.A. degrees in three years maybe I can contribute to your wonderful magazine.

Peace,
J. B. P.
via the internet

We've Endured

First and foremost, your magazine is informative and engaging. I just became a subscriber on line. Keep up the positive and much needed inclusion of who and what we are. I was so intrigued by the "7 Bachelors piece" that I wanted to know if I missed the piece on the sistahs? The piece on being gay and black in corporate America was wonderful as well. Sorry I missed the deadline for inclusion. I would love to see more articles on "out" African American gays and lesbians who are single as well as those of us who are parents. The definition of what a family is, is changing very quickly. It's important for our heterosexual counterparts to understand that our dreams, desires and needs are just as healthy and focused as theirs. Actually, even more so because we've endured so much to be who we are that we give true meaning to the word "agape." Keep up the wonderful job!

Monika M. Pickett
National Society of Black Engineers

Evidence

I enjoy your magazine. It is widely distributed throughout the West Village in Manhattan. The gay and lesbian community needs more magazines that give evidence of our positive contribution to society. Thank you for being a positive voice.

Nathasha Parris
Brooklyn, NY

At a Distance

First of all, let my just say, "thank you!" Since I left Atlanta and came back to Denver three years ago, I have felt so at a distance from "the Family" that I had grown close to in Atlanta. Now that I receive Venus at home, I feel a little less isolated, a little more connected to what is going on in "our" community. Secondly, I definitely need to say, "great job!" to all the writers, photographers, and other staff that make Venus possible.

Londell Jackson
Denver , CO

Serious Discussion

My partner and I attended Purple Diamonds' Black Tie Affair for Breast Cancer Awareness and there we were introduced to your magazine. We read two issues and each issue prompted serious discussions about our lives together and our responsibilites as part of the g/l community. Our prayers and support are with you as you fulfill your purpose in this world our God created!

Anonymous
via the internet

Venus

FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN THE LIFE

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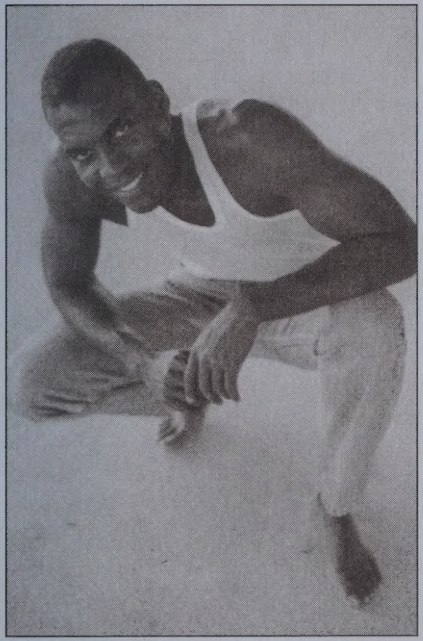

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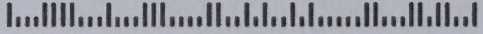

" I have been looking

for something like this for a very long time. . .

I can not wait to share this

delightful find with my sistahfriends."

Eye Opener

Today I viewed your magazine on-line. From what I read, I really enjoyed it. So much so, that I want to subscribe and have it sent to my home. I have been looking for books, magazines, and organizations that support the gay & lesbian lifestyles. I am currently on a Diversity Committee at my job, and your articles about gays & lesbians in the workplace and the stats given were a real eye opener for me. Thank you for this magazine, and thank you for allowing me to send you my comments.

Jacqueline Shelby
Software Training Consultant
Regence BlueShield
Seattle, WA

Places to Worship

I enjoy your magazine and I look forward to future issues. I noticed that the Oakland Black Pride weekend was not listed on your online calendar. Is there a reason for this? It is my understanding that the weekend events will take place June 9-11. Our Pride weekend is small compared to others, but should be mentioned in your calendar section. I'm also wondering if you plan to include a list of places of worship that are inclusive or open and affirming to BLGTs in your magazine? Readers might find it helpful. Thanks so much for a great publication.

Janice Steele
Oakland, CA

Delightful Find

Recently, I received the Spring 2000 issue of your wonderful magazine. A friend and co-worker gave it to me. He thought I might enjoy it. Was he right on the money!! I love it! I have been looking for somethinglike this for a very long time. I have read the magazine cover to cover, surfed your web site, and many of the interesting links. I cannot wait to share this delightful find with my sistahfriends. Thanks for such a great magazine. Keep up the great work

D. Springer
Houston, TX

Testify

I am really pleased to see someone interpreting and depicting the stories of eduacated black lesbians and gays. Even on a college campus (as liberal as we claim to be) this is not always the case. I plan to support this magazine by advertising it throughout the campuses of University of Illinois-Chicago and Champaign. It is important that we as African-American homosexuals testify to our experiences to soften the tension of homophobia. I wish the editor and supporting staff much success in the future.

ShiJuana M. Shannon

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Send letters to the editor:
editor@venusmagazine.com
or Venus Magazine Attn: Editor's desk P.O.Box 150
Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706

The Blackstripe, www.blackstripe.com your web address for information and news for and about same-gender-loving, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people of African descent. Features the Blacklist, a listing of notable sgl/lgbt people of African descent, www.blackstripe.com/blacklist.

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BLACKSTRIPE blackstripe.com

The Modern Day Spa

Today's Day Spa represents a unique combination of luxury. . . and necessity. It is a place where you can restore your spirit and express your beauty. Since the inception of the day spa, clients have experienced personal services and unique treatment. Spas are dedicated to providing a nurturing, professional environment that integrates elements of both science and nature with the human touch. For whatever reason you choose - personal beauty or to renew a sense of well-being - take time to escape . . . for an hour. . . an afternoon . . . or a day.

Modern spas offer a variety of pampering services:

We Got Your Back

You'll look extra tempting in that little backless number once you try the Red Door Salon & Spa's 'Back Facial.' Enjoy thorough cleansing, toning and herbal exfoliation combined with a healing oil massage.

The treatment includes a self-heating mud mask to remove impurities, remineralize and rebalance the skin; recommended as a service for skin in need of attention or as a luxurious skin softening treatment.

Salt of the Earth

Using a blend of salt the Citra-Spa Glow is an excellent exfoliating full body treatment. A combination of skin-nourishing lavender and tangerine oils is mixed with a special blend of spices in a formula guaranteed to satisfy the driest skin.

Indulge in a Marine Wrap. This full body wrap rich in amino acids and vitamins uses seaweeds to help revitalize skin cells and replenish trace elements in the body. Relax in a thermal body wrap followed by a cool shower, and finish with an application of **'Kiss My Ass' Moisturizing Body Balm.**

Play it Cool

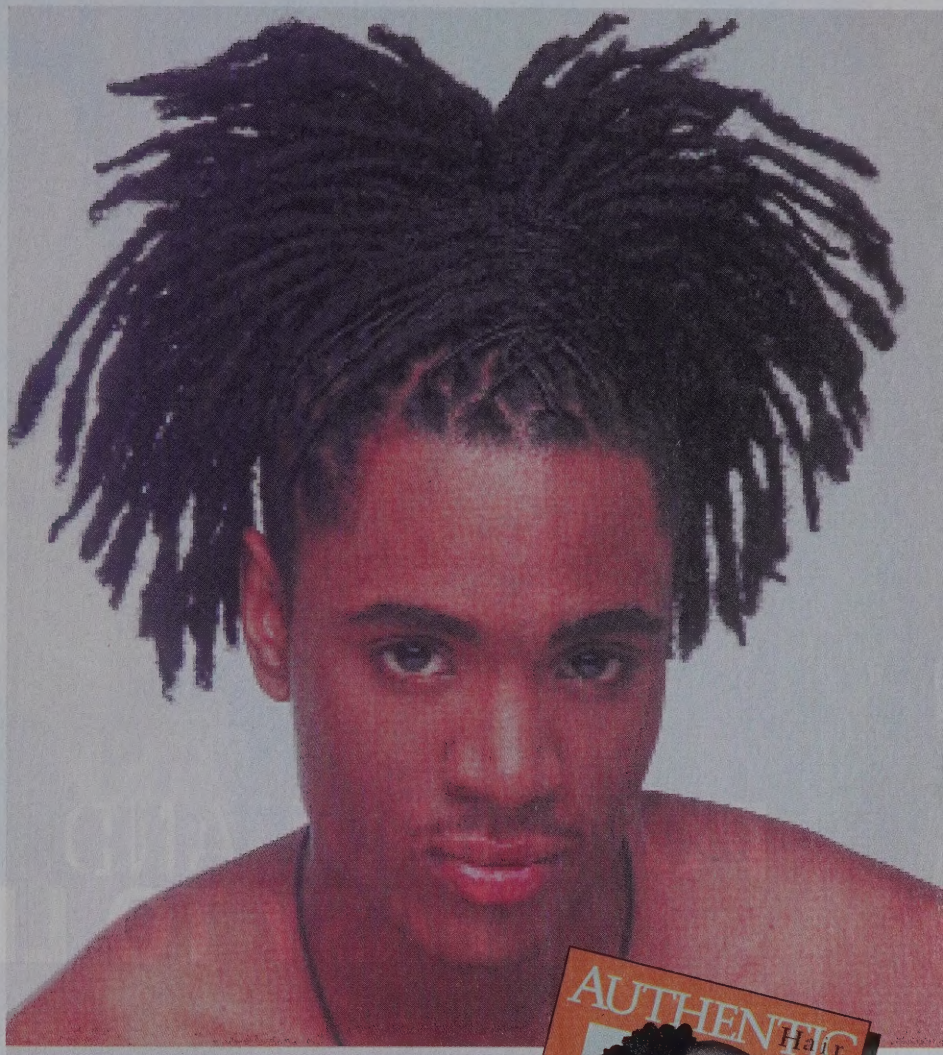
You've missed your REIKI or Swedish massage appointment at the Spa and you need an immediate stress buster. Try **Aveda's Blue Oil Balancing Concentrate.** It is an all-purpose, stress-relieving, aroma-therapy miracle. Apply to skin and pressure points for a simultaneous cooling/heating sensory experience. Soothe a busy-mind. Center a stressed body. Tame a tense muscle. Do it all with Blue Oil.

Ardent about Arden

At the Red Door Salon & Spa, in New York City, clients can relax with a cup of herbal tea, or dine on a low fat meal between spa services in the lunch cafe, overlooking Fifth Ave. A trickling waterfall promotes a sense of calm on every floor.

The circular red confidant is the hub of the Red Door's second floor "Grand Salon" where both hair and nails services are available.

The luxurious pedicure experience includes a foot soak in a fragrant bath of warm water, sprinkled with fresh rose petals.



Authentic Hair

We celebrate the the richness and beauty of our heritage when we wear our hair in its natural state. Master cutter and "locktician," and co-owner of Locks & Chops Salon in New York City, Ademola Mandella presents Authentic Hair, his definitive coffee-table volume. "The book's purpose is to educate and dispel myths and misconceptions that we have about our hair in its natural state. You know the ones: natural hair is dreadful, rebellious, and lacks versatility."

The book illustrate that natural hair styles can meet the social, political, and professional demands necessary for todays contemporary living.

POWERFUL AND
EASY TO LIVE WITH.

VIRACEPT IS POWERFUL It's tough on HIV. In many people, VIRACEPT lowered the amount of HIV in the blood to levels below the limit of detection of the test used, and substantially increased CD4 cell counts after 24 weeks of triple combination therapy. (The clinical significance of changes in viral RNA levels in blood has not been established. The virus may still be present in other organ systems.) **VIRACEPT IS EASY TO LIVE WITH** Take it three times a day with your normal meals or light snacks. **VIRACEPT IS GENERALLY WELL TOLERATED** People treated with VIRACEPT may experience some side effects; the most common is diarrhea of moderate or greater intensity in 20% of people in clinical trials. **VIRACEPT WORKS** It's indicated for the treatment of HIV infection when anti-HIV drug therapy is warranted. It is not yet known whether taking VIRACEPT will help you live

WHAT YOUR **PROTEASE INHIBITOR** CAN BE:

longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that can occur with HIV. Some common medications and some HIV related medications should not be taken with VIRACEPT. For some people, protease inhibitors have been associated with the onset or worsening of diabetes mellitus and hyperglycemia, and with increased bleeding in patients with hemophilia. Ask your doctor. For more information, call toll free **1-888-VIRACEPT** or visit **www.agouron.com**. (Refer to the important information on the next page.)

VIRACEPT
nelfinavir mesylate

Agouron
Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
A Warner-Lambert Company

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VIRACEPT®
nelfinavir mesylate

Information for Patients About VIRACEPT® (VI-ra-cept)
Generic Name: nelfinavir (nel-FIN-na-veer) mesylate

For the Treatment of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infection

Please read this information carefully before taking VIRACEPT. Also, please read this leaflet each time you renew the prescription, just in case anything has changed. This is a summary and not a replacement for a careful discussion with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss VIRACEPT when you start taking this medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when taking VIRACEPT and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

WHAT IS VIRACEPT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

VIRACEPT is used in the treatment of people with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. Infection with HIV leads to the destruction of CD4 T cells, which are important to the immune system. After a large number of CD4 cells have been destroyed, the infected person develops acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

VIRACEPT works by blocking HIV protease (a protein-cutting enzyme), which is required for HIV to multiply. VIRACEPT has been shown to significantly reduce the amount of HIV in the blood. You should be aware, however, that the effect of VIRACEPT on HIV in the blood has not been correlated with long-term health benefits. Patients who took VIRACEPT also had significant increases in their CD4 cell count.

VIRACEPT is usually taken together with other antiretroviral drugs such as Retrovir® (zidovudine, AZT), Epivir® (lamivudine, 3TC), or Zerit® (stavudine, d4T). Taking VIRACEPT in combination with other antiretroviral drugs reduces the amount of HIV in the body (viral load) and raises CD4 counts.

VIRACEPT may be taken by adults, adolescents, and children 2 years of age or older. Studies in infants younger than 2 years of age are now taking place.

DOES VIRACEPT CURE HIV OR AIDS?

VIRACEPT is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of VIRACEPT are not known at this time. People taking VIRACEPT may still develop opportunistic infections or other conditions associated with HIV infection. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections, and Kaposi's sarcoma.

It is not known whether VIRACEPT will help you live longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that may occur.

There is no proof that VIRACEPT can reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

WHO SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT TAKE VIRACEPT?

Together with your doctor, you need to decide whether VIRACEPT is appropriate for you. In making your decision, the following should be considered:

Allergies: If you have had a serious allergic reaction to VIRACEPT, you must not take VIRACEPT. You should also inform your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist of any known allergies to substances such as other medicines, foods, preservatives, or dyes.

If you are pregnant: The effects of VIRACEPT on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

If you are breast-feeding: You should discuss with your doctor the best way to feed your baby. You should be aware that if your baby does not already have HIV, there is a chance that it can be transmitted through breast-feeding. **Women should not breast-feed if they have HIV.**

Children: VIRACEPT is available for the treatment of children 2 through 13 years of age with HIV. There is a powder form of VIRACEPT that can be mixed with milk, baby formula, or foods like pudding. Instructions on how to take VIRACEPT powder can be found in a later section that discusses how VIRACEPT Oral Powder should be prepared.

If you have liver disease: VIRACEPT has not been studied in people with liver disease. If you have liver disease, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

Other medical problems: Certain medical problems may affect the use of VIRACEPT. Some people taking protease inhibitors have developed new or more serious diabetes or high blood sugar. Some people with hemophilia have had increased bleeding. It is not known whether the protease inhibitors caused these problems. Be sure to tell your doctor if you have hemophilia types A and B, diabetes mellitus, or an increase in thirst and/or frequent urination.

CAN VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS?

VIRACEPT may interact with other drugs, including those you take without a prescription. You must discuss with your doctor any drugs that you are taking or are planning to take before you take VIRACEPT.

Drugs you should <u>not</u> take with VIRACEPT:

- Seldane® (terfenadine, for allergies)
- Hismanal® (astemizole, for allergies)
- Propulsid® (cisapride, for heartburn)
- Cordarone® (amiodarone, for irregular heartbeat)
- Quinidine (for irregular heartbeat), also known as Quinaglute®, Cardioquin®, Quinidex®, and others
- Ergot derivatives (Cafergot® and others, for migraine headache)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Versed® (midazolam)

Taking the above drugs with VIRACEPT may cause serious and/or life-threatening adverse events.

- Rifampin (for tuberculosis), also known as Rimactane®, Rifadin®, Rifater®, or Rifamate®

This drug reduces blood levels of VIRACEPT.

Dose reduction required if you take VIRACEPT with:

Mycobutin® (rifabutin, for MAC); you will need to take a lower dose of Mycobutin.

A change of therapy should be considered if you are taking VIRACEPT with:

- Phenobarbital
- Phenytoin (Dilantin® and others)
- Carbamazepine (Tegretol® and others)

These agents may reduce the amount of VIRACEPT in your blood and make it less effective.

- Oral contraceptives ("the pill")

If you are taking the pill to prevent pregnancy, you should use a different type of contraception since VIRACEPT may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER ANTI-HIV DRUGS?

Taking VIRACEPT together with other anti-HIV drugs increases their ability to fight the virus. It also reduces the opportunity for resistant viruses to grow. Based on your history of taking other anti-HIV medicine, your doctor will direct you on how to take VIRACEPT and other anti-HIV medicines. These drugs should be taken in a certain order or at specific times. This will depend on how many times a day each medicine should be taken. It will also depend on whether it should be taken with or without food.

Nucleoside analogues: No drug interaction problems were seen when VIRACEPT was given with:

- Retrovir (zidovudine, AZT)
- Epivir (lamivudine, 3TC)
- Zerit (stavudine, d4T)
- Videx® (didanosine, ddI)

If you are taking both Videx (ddI) and VIRACEPT: Videx should be taken without food, on an empty stomach. Therefore, you should take VIRACEPT with food one hour after or more than two hours before you take Videx.

Nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs):

When VIRACEPT is taken together with:

- Viramune® (nevirapine)

The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be reduced. Studies are now taking place to learn about the safety of combining VIRACEPT with Viramune.

- Other NNRTIs

VIRACEPT has not been studied with other NNRTIs.

Other protease inhibitors:

When VIRACEPT is taken together with:

- Crixivan® (indinavir)

The amount of both drugs in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

- Norvir™ (ritonavir)

The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

- Invirase® (saquinavir)

The amount of saquinavir in your blood may be increased. If used in combination with saquinavir hard gelatin capsules at 600 mg three times daily, no dose adjustments are needed. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIRACEPT?

Like all medicines, VIRACEPT can cause side effects. Most of the side effects experienced with VIRACEPT have been mild to moderate. Diarrhea is the most common side effect in people taking VIRACEPT, and most adult patients had at least mild diarrhea at some point during treatment. In clinical studies, about 20% of patients receiving VIRACEPT 750 mg (three tablets) three times daily had four or more loose stools a day. In most cases, diarrhea can be controlled using antidiarrheal medicines, such as Imodium® A-D (loperamide) and others, which are available without a prescription.

Other side effects that occurred in 2% or more of patients receiving VIRACEPT include abdominal pain, asthenia, nausea, flatulence, and rash.

There were other side effects noted in clinical studies that occurred in less than 2% of patients receiving VIRACEPT. However, these side effects may have been due to other drugs that patients were taking or to the illness itself. Except for diarrhea, there were not many differences in side effects in patients who took VIRACEPT along with other drugs compared with those who took only the other drugs. For a complete list of side effects, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD I TAKE VIRACEPT?

VIRACEPT is available only with your doctor's prescription. The light blue VIRACEPT Tablets should be taken three times a day. VIRACEPT should always be taken with a meal or a light snack. You do **not** have to take VIRACEPT exactly every 8 hours. Instead, you can take it at normal times when you are eating.

Take VIRACEPT exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not increase or decrease any dose or the number of doses per day. Also, take this medicine for the exact period of time that your doctor has instructed. **Do not stop taking VIRACEPT without first consulting with your doctor, even if you are feeling better.**

Only take medicine that has been prescribed specifically for you. Do not give VIRACEPT to others or take medicine prescribed for someone else.

The dosing of VIRACEPT may be different for you than for other patients. **Follow the directions from your doctor, exactly as written on the label.** The amount of VIRACEPT in the blood should remain somewhat consistent over time. Missing doses will cause the concentration of VIRACEPT to decrease; therefore, **you should not miss any doses.** However, if you miss a dose, you should take the dose as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose and future doses as originally scheduled.

Dosing in adults (including children 14 years of age and older)

The recommended adult dose of VIRACEPT is 750 mg (three tablets) taken three times a day. Each dose should be taken with a meal or light snack.

Dosing in children 2 through 13 years of age

The VIRACEPT dose in children depends on their weight. The recommended dose is 20 to 30 mg/kg (or 9 to 14 mg/pound) per dose, taken three times daily with a meal or light snack. This can be administered either in tablet form or, in children unable to take tablets, as VIRACEPT Oral Powder.

Dose instructions will be provided by the child's doctor. The dose will be given three times daily using the measuring scoop provided, a measuring teaspoon, or one or more tablets depending on the weight and age of the child. The amount of oral powder or tablets to be given to a child is described in the chart below.

Pediatric Dose to Be Administered Three Times Daily

Body Weight Kg	Body Weight Lb	Number of Level Scoops*	Number of Level Teaspoons†	Number of Tablets
7 to < 8.5	15.5 to <18.5	4	1	-
8.5 to <10.5	18.5 to <23	5	1¼	-
10.5 to <12	23 to <26.5	6	1½	-
12 to <14	26.5 to <31	7	1¾	-
14 to <16	31 to <35	8	2	-
16 to <18	35 to <39.5	9	2¼	-
18 to <23	39.5 to <50.5	10	2½	2
≥23	≥50.5	15	3¼	3

In measuring oral powder, the scoop or teaspoon should be level.

* 1 level scoop contains 50 mg of VIRACEPT. Use only the scoop provided with your VIRACEPT bottle.

† 1 level teaspoon contains 200 mg of VIRACEPT. Note: **A measuring teaspoon used for dispensing medication** should be used for measuring VIRACEPT Oral Powder. Ask your pharmacist to make sure you have a medication dispensing teaspoon.

How should VIRACEPT Oral Powder be prepared?

The oral powder may be mixed with a small amount of water, milk, formula, soy formula, soy milk, dietary supplements, or dairy foods such as pudding or ice cream. Once mixed, the entire amount must be taken to obtain the full dose.

Do **not** mix the powder with any acidic food or juice, such as orange or grapefruit juice, apple juice, or apple sauce, because this may create a bitter taste.

Once the powder is mixed, it may be stored at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 6 hours. Do **not** heat the mixed dose once it has been prepared.

Do **not** add water to bottles of oral powder.

VIRACEPT powder is supplied with a scoop for measuring. For help in determining the exact dose of powder for your child, please ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

VIRACEPT Oral Powder contains aspartame, a low-calorie sweetener, and therefore should not be taken by children with phenylketonuria (PKU).

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT BE STORED?

Keep VIRACEPT and all other medicines out of the reach of children. Keep bottle closed and store at room temperature (between 59°F and 86°F) away from sources of moisture such as a sink or other damp place. Heat and moisture may reduce the effectiveness of VIRACEPT.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. Be sure that if you throw any medicine away, it is out of the reach of children.

Discuss all questions about your health with your doctor. If you have questions about VIRACEPT or any other medication you are taking, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. You can also call 1.888.VIRACEPT (1.888.847.2237) toll free.

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Issued 11/13/97

CALL 1.888.VIRACEPT

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Love, Lust, Passion, Pain

Three years ago, Loreen Williams futilely searched on-line for clues on where to meet other lesbians of color. She found her soul mate, Pamela Thomas, when she answered an ad in New York's Village Voice.

"We met and quickly married!," says Williams. Wanting to express to friends the exciting news of having found someone and to express how they felt about each other, the couple discovered that there was a void for products and media targeting lesbians of color . "There wasn't anything available that let you express how you felt about somebody you love," Williams added. "It's tough if you're not out because you can't express it to anyone else. We at least want to express it to each other."

It was because of this absence that Williams and Thomas conceived Blackberricafe.com (TM) -- "where the girlz hang out," an internet site developed to provide a safe, nurturing place for lesbians of color to hang out. Loreen and Pamela designed the site to feature a comfortable, interactive community so that members can participate, learn, share and provide feedback. The site includes a variety of content and features that reflect the diverse interests of the lesbian of color community.

The flagship product offered on the site is the BlackberriXpressions (tm), Love,Lust, Passion, Pain series of greeting cards, designed especially with women of color in mind.

"It gets to be hard going to a Hallmark or your local drugstore and buying the husband card to the wife to express how you feel about your partner, and that's what we were doing," said Pam.

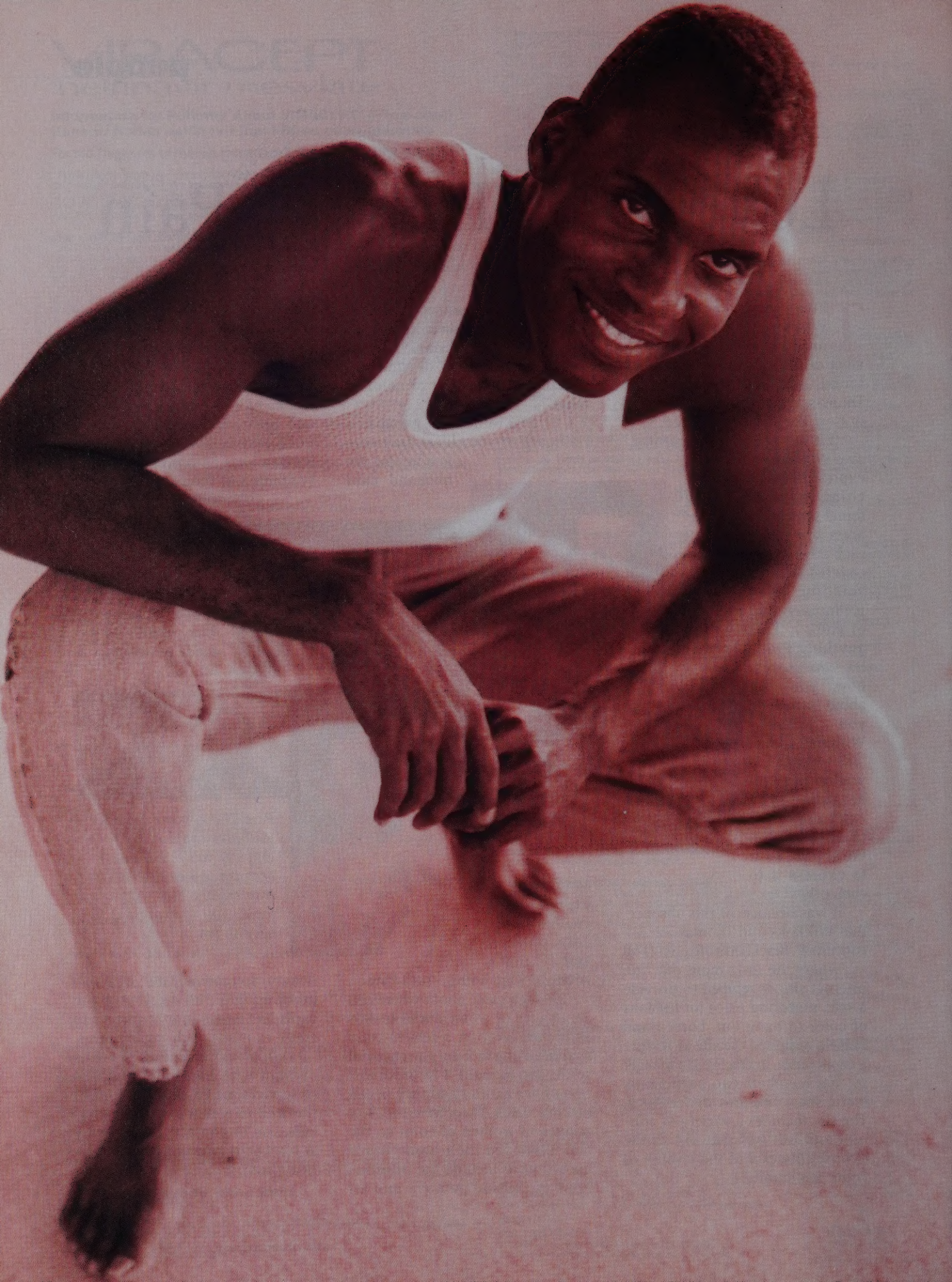
The idea came about where clip art images of women who looked as if they were in a relationship sparked Pamela's entrepreneurial spirit. She brought it to the attention of her partner and they began making cards. There were very few images of women of color so the duo expanded their home-based operation to include the illustrations of lesbian painter, and art educator, Jean S. Rosa to capture their nuances.

"Even though some of the characters appear sad or lonesome, they also project an underlying feeling of hopefulness, forgiveness and positivity in the imagery," Rosa reveals. "I try to portray women as equals," she says. Williams and Thomas believe Rosa has poured out her heart and soul in the intensity of creations and have taken "her own experience and emotions and poured it onto a canvas." They plan to include postcards, stationary, decorative plates, wearable items, using the art depicted on the cards and works of other artists to create exquisite, high-quality items.

Pam Thomas and Loreen Williams explain, "It's tough if you're not out because you can't express it to anyone else. We at least want to express it to each other."

Lesbian entrepreneurs or artists of color with high-quality goods or services are encouraged to visit the web site at www.blackberricafe.com or contact the company at blackberrixpressions@blackberricafe.com.

VAN DE ZEE



15 Ways to tell if Your Man is Gay!

SistahFriends! Yes, we're talking to our straight sistahs who occasionally glance through these pages, so you think you've met the ideal man. He's warm and considerate; always understands your thoughts, has a killer wardrobe and never tried to kiss you. You're thinking the two of you are perfect for one another. Why doesn't he see it, too? Is your butt too big? Or could it be that maybe . . . HE'S GAY??!! When you're feeling absolutely certain that your awesome date is a "real" man, beware. You could very well be sharing him with a another "real" man. You can't always tell by 'gaydar' so we decided to give you a few eye opening tips.

1. He looks in your eyes,not at your boobs. Dead give-away! If he's not holding a conversation with your breast, something is wrong.
2. He wears designer clothing, tucked tight. Really. Neat is one thing, Neat Freak is another.
3. You gave him your number (he didn't ask for it), although a brotha will ask you for sex, even if he is gay.
4. He comments on your nail polish and asks if it's "MAC..." Straight men cannot recall cosmetic brand names.
5. He dances shirtless. This is a gay male mating ritual.
6. He has several single cute guy friends. However, they seem to be more interested in each other than the posse of fine girlfriends you invited.
7. He drops designer names and tends to shop 'til YOU drop.
8. He carries lip balm. But he still hasn't kissed you yet.
9. He has fantastic body posture. A man who stands up that straight is looking for another man.
10. Theatrical inflection. "Oh My God. LOVE her."
11. He wears colored contacts. Enough said.
12. He drinks flavored vodka. Sweets for the sweet!
13. The IKEA catalog is poised on a book stand in his library. And his home is filled with it's merchandise.
14. Karaoke (taken seriously) Run, girl!
15. He watches Oprah.

Adapted from the illustrated book *Is He Gay?* by Ed Baker and Chris Busick, Simon & Schuster, copyright 2000

JONATHAN BROOKS

Purple Diamonds

1. Keynote, LaTanya Junior 2. Bishop Zachary Jones, Andrea Young, Coydette Beharie 3. A happy couple enjoying the evening 4. Monique, Mia, Lisa, Cheryl, Donna 5. Singer, Pam Groves brings the house down 6. Kelley, Sofia, Mavissa, Vanessa 7. Cynthia, Elaine, Peggie, Miche, J.P., Diamond, Charlyn, Lenora 8. Al B Merlas and friend 9. Denise , Yuri, Mirian, Corina, Lisa, Jaquie, Brindle 10. Rose Miller, denise Coles and founder Judi Smith 11. Events promoter Peggie Miller and entertainer Miche Braden of The Performance Arts Chorale 12. Cheryl and Donna 13. Survivor, Diane Braxton talks about her battle with breast cancer. 14. Founder, Judi Smith 15. Designers, Karen Young and Jewel Shannon Models: 16. Kimberly 17. Yuri 18. Iris 19. Yuri 20. Al B 21. Kimberly, Jewel and Yuri 22. Myra 23. Kimberly

DENIS COLES

Purple Diamond's Annual Black Tie Charity Ball benefiting breast cancer research was attended by 230 New York and New Jersey women. Held in the elegance and privacy of a Jewish social hall, the buzz is already on for next year's event. Purple Diamonds **founder Judi Smith** and her partner Rose Miller, envisioned an event where "we could get dressed and celebrate an elegant spring evening with our sistahs while raising awareness about an issue that deeply affects black women."

Women were provided with information about low-cost or free mammograms by the **American Cancer Society** and were moved by the story of Diane Braxton, a breast cancer survivor. The evening included a key note address by media expert, LaTanya Junior and a fabulous fashion show and dance.

Designers showcased were Karen Young of East 17 Funky Clothing, Jewel Shannon of Jewel Shannon Designs, Courtney Washington of Courtney Washington Designs, Moshood and Steve Cutting of Jim & Mary Lu's New York. The evenings models included Pat Powers, Kimberly Q Purnell, Al B Merlas, Lisa Smith, Myra Gandy, Iris Rivera and Yuri Rojas.

Purple Diamonds is also a travel club for women. Smith coordinates vacations for small groups of women at 5 Star locations around the world. Their summer club will vacation in luxurious **Key West** Florida from August 5-10. For info about events or travel call 718-623-9428 or visit www.purplediamonds.org.

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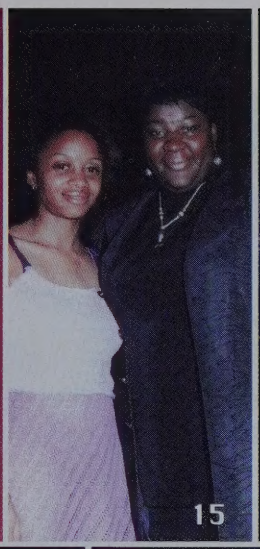
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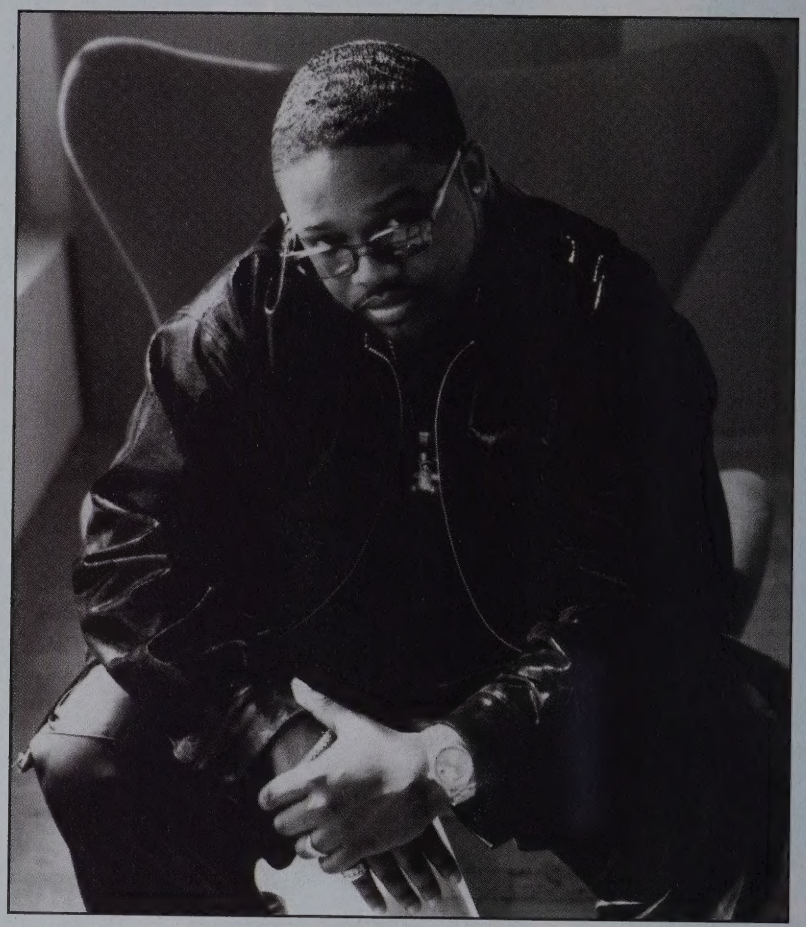
David Hollister
Makes Debut as Director



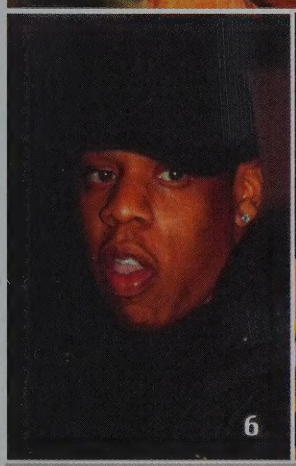
The rugged soul man marks his first move behind the lens with the video "Can't Stay," the third single from his gold-selling CD, *Ghetto Hymns* on Def Squad/DreamWorks. The third time is definitely the charm as far as Hollister is concerned. After scoring two consecutive hit singles --the sexy "My Favorite Girl" and the gritty "Babymamadrama" -- Hollister is releasing the heartfelt and melodic "Can't Stay."

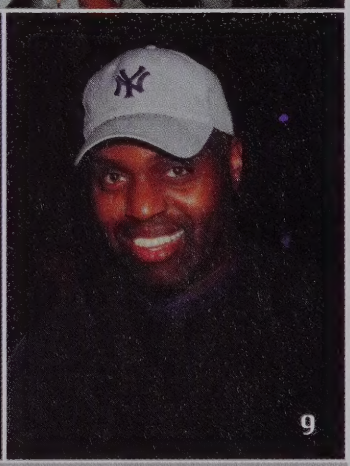
"I've been blessed with some great videos so far on this album," explains the soulful singer/songwriter/producer, "and I've had the chance to learn and pick up some pointers, which I'm gonna use to tell my story with 'Can't Stay.' I was very excited to have the opportunity to stretch my talents, and work in another area, like video. I really enjoyed making this video and I hope that my fans can tell that."

Dave's fans have known the depth of his talents for years. Church trained and soul fueled, Hollister reigned as one of the top session and studio artists in R&B, working with such partners as the late Tupac Shakur, Patti LaBelle, Mary J. Blige and Vanessa Bell Armstrong. He eventually joined the R&B quartet, BlackStreet. It was Dave's eclecticism, along with his stirring vocal and rough and ready persona that helped secure him a solo deal with rapper/producer Erik Sermon's Def Squad imprint, a venture distributed through DreamWorks Records.

Hear what everyone's talking about on *Ghetto Hymns* and you can see Dave's vision on the brand new video "Can't Stay."

KWAKN ALSTON





1. Eve and guest at Tommy Hilfiger Tommy Jeans Fall Fashion Show, NYC 2. Mary J. Blige at the Kitty Boots Fall/Winter Fashion Show, NYC 3. Jody Whatley performance at Winter Music Conference, South Beach, FL 4. Foxy Brown at Tommy Hilfiger Tommy Jeans Fall Fashion Show, NYC 5. Wunmi performance at Winter Music Conference, South Beach, FL 6. Jay-Z at Tommy Jeans Show, NYC 7. Kevin Aviance performance for Winter Music Conference, South Beach, FL 8. Toni Braxtonat the Annual CFDA Awards Gala, NYC 9. Frankie Knuckles at Centro-Fly, NYC

TINA PAUL

OUR HOUSE
Kids on Growing up with Gay Parents

OUR HOUSE is an upbeat, frank, and insightful exploration of what it means to have grown up with gay or lesbian parents. The one-hour documentary will air nationwide on PBS stations in June, in conjunction with Gay Pride Month (check local listings). The documentary profiles the sons and daughters -- ages five to twenty-three years old -- in five diverse families who are facing the usual highs and lows of growing up, developing their own feelings about their parents' sexuality, and encountering a wide variety of reactions from relatives, classmates, teachers, and neighbors. Filmmaker Meena Spadola, who grew up with a lesbian mom in small town Maine, chose families that illustrate the many faces of gay and lesbian families -- African American, Latino and white; upscale and working-class; urban, suburban and rural; Mormon, Christian, and Jewish; from New York to Arizona to Arkansas.

MEN'S CONFERENCE

Gay Men of African Descent's 3rd Annual Summer Conference for Men of African, Caribbean, Latino diaspora who share same gender loving experiences will be held in New York City on July 15, 2000. This year's theme, MYSELF, OUR COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD. Registration is free and volunteers are welcome. For more information and location contact GMAD at 212-414-9344 ext. 28 or Email: gmad@aol.com.

Women on Tour

The ExxonMobil African American Women on Tour, (AAWOT) conference series celebrates its 10th anniversary of producing empowerment conference for Black women. AAWOT's mission is to uplift and improve the quality of life for Black women, their families and communities through economic, intellectual and spiritual development. Events include workshops, forums and presenters who speak on women's social, economic and political issues.

LESBIAN CONFERENCE

A new acronym, NBLC, denotes the National Black Lesbian Conference, scheduled for April 2001 in Atlanta, GA. Zuna Institute, a national advocacy organization for black lesbians will host it's first conference in Atlanta, the "City Too Busy to Hate." The purpose is to come together to set a national agenda for black lesbians, and to bridge the gap between organizations and communities across the nation. The buzz is already out which indicates that this meeting could represent the largest number of black lesbians to attend a conference in the history of the gay & lesbian movement. At a planning meeting during the National Black Lesbian/Gay Leadership Forum in Chicago, Dr. Kofi Adoma of Detroit urged, "there is a definite need for this conference to happen, we have not come together nationally in over 10 years." Cynthia Walston a core committee member adds,"I look forward to networking with 500 black lesbians who are impacting my life by standing for issues that affect me. I want to know who I owe thanks to for making a space for me." The commitment of the core committee is make all black lesbians feel welcomed. Speakers, workshop proposals, and vendors are needed. For information contact Francine Ramsey at (510) 482-4862 or email Framsey@zunainstitute.org.

AAWOT 2000 Conference Dates

Orlando, FL .....July 14-16
New York, NY .....July 21-23
Chicago, IL.....Aug. 3-5
Atlanta, GA.....Aug. 25-27
Los Angeles, CA ...Sept.29-Oct. 1
Debbie Allen Keynotes each city.
For more information call 800-560-AAWT(2298); or register online at www.aawot.com.

INTERNATIONAL CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE ON AIDS AND DISABILITIES

September 4-7th, 2000

at the Sam Lords Castle, Barbados

Caribbean Rising

Caribbean Rising *Mobilizing Health Care In The New Millennium.*

Conference Objective:

To provide an international forum in the Caribbean about HIV/AIDS and Disabilities, thereby initiating action to mobilize and improve the quality of health for all individuals.

Conference Tracks may include:

- *Behavioral, and clinical sciences*
- *Social sciences*
- *Policy and public health issues*
- *Programs, care management, and outreach.*
- *Religious instructions role in health management.*

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Powerful Therapy That Fits the Way You Live

LOWER VIRUS LEVELS—LONGER

SUSTIVA isn't just effective in combination treatment of HIV-1 infection; it's effective long-term. In clinical studies, combination therapies containing SUSTIVA were proven superior to protease inhibitor–containing regimens in lowering the HIV virus to levels that were undetectable.[1] In one study, SUSTIVA kept it at those levels for more than two years.[2]

TAKE IT JUST ONCE A DAY

SUSTIVA fits the way you live because you take it just once a day. It can be taken with or without meals, and there's no need to drink lots of liquid.

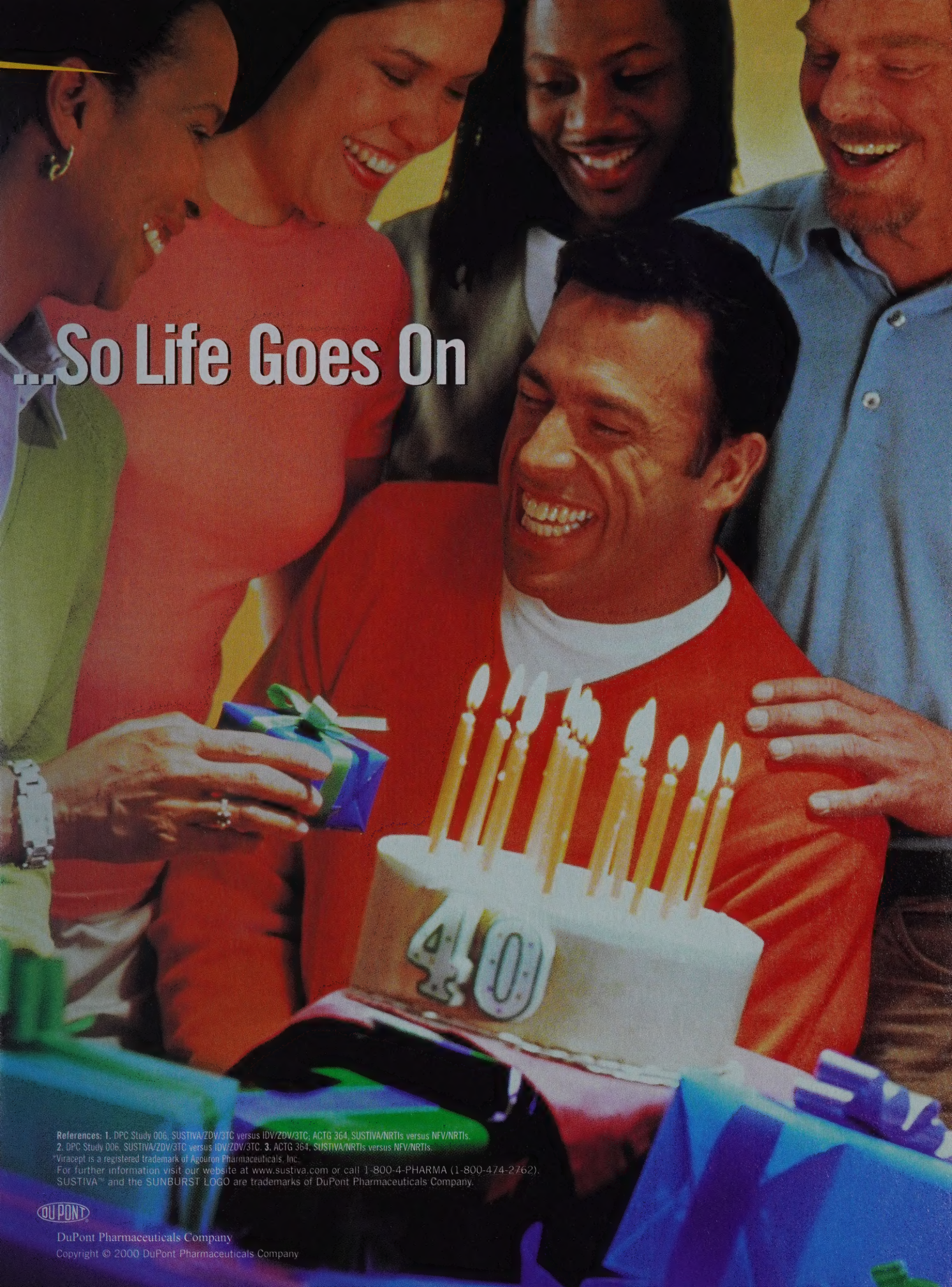
GENERALLY TOLERABLE SIDE EFFECTS

SUSTIVA is generally well tolerated, with fewer gastrointestinal (GI) side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, than Viracept®*.[3] Diabetes, kidney stones, and life-threatening liver problems are rare.

SAFETY INFORMATION

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting SUSTIVA. They tend to go away after you have taken the medicine for a few weeks. A small number of patients have had severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. If you have these symptoms, you should contact your doctor immediately to discuss your therapy. There have been a few reports of suicide, but SUSTIVA has not been established as the cause. Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA because birth defects have been seen in cynomolgus monkeys given SUSTIVA. See Patient Information about SUSTIVA on the following pages.

Once Daily
SUSTIVA™
efavirenz



References: 1. DPC Study 006, SUSTIVA/ZDV/3TC versus IDV/ZDV/3TC; ACTG 364, SUSTIVA/NRTIs versus NFV/NRTIs. **2.** DPC Study 006, SUSTIVA/ZDV/3TC versus IDV/ZDV/3TC. **3.** ACTG 364, SUSTIVA/NRTIs versus NFV/NRTIs.

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For further information visit our website at www.sustiva.com or call 1-800-4-PHARMA (1-800-474-2762).

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Once Daily
SUSTIVA™
efavirenz

SUSTIVA™ (efavirenz) capsules

Patient Information about SUSTIVA* (sus-TEE-vah) for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
Generic name: efavirenz (eh-FAH-vih-rehnz)

Please read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA. Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. Don't treat this leaflet as your only source of information about SUSTIVA. Always discuss SUSTIVA with your doctor when you start taking your medicine and at every visit. You should remain under a doctor's care when using SUSTIVA. You should not change or stop treatment without first talking to your doctor.

What is SUSTIVA?
SUSTIVA is a medicine used to help treat HIV, the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

How does SUSTIVA work?
SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (called "viral load"). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells (a type of immune cell in blood). SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

Does SUSTIVA cure HIV or AIDS?
SUSTIVA is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important that you remain under the care of your doctor.

Does SUSTIVA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?
SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

How should I take SUSTIVA?
- The dose of SUSTIVA for adults is 600 mg (three 200 mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).
- Take SUSTIVA at the same time each day. You should take SUSTIVA at bedtime during the first few weeks or if you have side effects, such as dizziness or trouble concentrating (see **What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**).
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water, juice, milk or soda. You may take SUSTIVA with or without meals; however, SUSTIVA should not be taken with a high fat meal.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away. If you do miss a dose, do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.

Can children take SUSTIVA?
Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

Who should not take SUSTIVA?
Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to SUSTIVA or any of its ingredients.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?
Talk to your doctor right away if you:
- Are pregnant or want to become pregnant
- Are breast-feeding
- Have problems with your liver, or have had hepatitis
- Start or change any medicine
- Have side effects while taking SUSTIVA
- Have a history of mental illness, substance or alcohol abuse

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?
A small number of patients have had severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. Some patients have had thoughts of suicide and a few patients have actually committed suicide. These problems tend to occur more often in patients with a history of mental illness. You should contact your doctor immediately if you think you are having these symptoms, so your doctor can decide whether you should continue to take SUSTIVA.

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting treatment with SUSTIVA. These feelings may be less noticeable if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime. They also tend to go away after you've taken the medicine for a few weeks. If you have these side effects, such as dizziness, it does not mean that you will also have severe depression, strange thoughts or angry behavior. Tell your doctor promptly if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. There is the possibility that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs. You should avoid driving or operating machinery if you are having these side effects.

One of the most common side effects is rash. These rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor promptly.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea. However, this is not a complete list of side effects reported with SUSTIVA when taken with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss a more complete list of side effects with you.

Please contact your doctor immediately before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects. Tell your doctor or other healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

What about birth control, pregnancy, or breast-feeding?
Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA. Birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. You should use a condom or diaphragm in addition to other methods of birth control while taking SUSTIVA. Inform your doctor immediately if you are pregnant. If you want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor. Do not take SUSTIVA if you are breast-feeding. Talk to your doctor if you are breast-feeding your baby.

Can I take other medicines with SUSTIVA?
SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Your doctor may change your medicines or change their doses. For this reason, it is very important to:
- Let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- Tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your medicines when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA**:
- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

The following medicines may need to be changed or have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA**:
- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Fortovase® (saquinavir)
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin)

How should I keep SUSTIVA?
SUSTIVA is available as 50 mg, 100 mg, and 200 mg capsules.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59°-86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

How can I learn more about SUSTIVA?
Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider if you have questions about either SUSTIVA or HIV. For additional information you can visit the SUSTIVA website at http://www.sustiva.com.

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

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Rogue Amazon

Pam Jones (l) and her partner, Juliet Draper of Rogue Amazon Entertainment Co.

"I love my sister, but ..." she declared, adding her slogan for her new musical venture, "Move over Grace Jones, here comes Juliet." A five track CD single and 12" vinyl by life and business partners Pam Jones and Juliet Draper, two Colorado Springs women. The CD is now available at www.rogueamazon.com. The recording features the original Europop song, "Rogue Amazon" - and a remake of the 1977 European hit "I Need a Man," which brought instant musical fame to singer and actress Grace Jones, Pam's older sister.

"Rogue Amazon" is the theme song for the company, Rogue Amazon Entertainment, founded by Jones and Draper in 1997. The song written, performed and produced by Jones and Draper, in collaboration with Denver-based Look At You Records comes in two tracks, featuring Draper as lead vocalist. The CD is the duo's first attempt at song writing, but not their initial venture into the entertainment world. Draper, full-time Colorado Springs fire-fighter, has performed as a singer, dancer and actress in dozens of musical theater production, most at the Karamu Theater in her native Cleveland. Jones was the owner and manager of Jones of Jamaica, a retail fabric store and haute couture in Old Colorado City, prior to opening The Body Scenter, a retail body care products company in 1986 - a business she still operates via mail order. Jones and Draper, met in 1992, formed Rogue Amazon Productions in 1997 as a performing arts company dedicated to stimulating social awareness.

"Our mission is to entertain and generate financial support for institutions that work to resolve challenging community issues," Jones said, emphasizing that a benefit production ... raised more than $10,000 for organization dealing with at-risk youth.

In addition to launching their first CD, Jones and Draper are also developing their first-motion picture tentatively titled "Camille's Magic" scheduled for shooting in October 2000.

"No place for my spirit from birth,
no place for the power I deserve.
No it's not that I want to be a man...
want to be the strong woman that I am."

All You Can Eat Deep Dish Gossip Buffet

Victuals, victuals, and more victuals. Grab a plate, honey, and enjoy.

By Nigelica Lefranz

Hot Releases

This summer promises to deliver the ultimate life soundtrack, starting off with the Baltimore-based group **Ruff Endz.** These two sexy young men rocked my house from track to track, no kidding y'all. They deserve to be the main course on Nigelica's buffet. These boys can sang!

Kenny "Baby Face" Edmonds and Kelly Price are both dropping CDs this summer. Sources tell me that **Ms. Anita Baker** is planning a supercharged comeback, too. We all know about **Whitney Houston**'s classic best CD and all I can say is it's about time. From what I've read on the track listing, if you haven't picked up any of Whitney's music in the past, this is the one to own.

"Dark Child" Jerkins, is a smash. The video, directed by Billy Woodruff, features her fiance' as well as the infamous **Robin Givens.**

I see "Grammys," "VH1" Awards, "MTV" Awards and "Soul Train" Awards. Let's all pray for a better production of the "Soul Train" awards next year because I still have a bad taste in my mouth about the last one. Don't get me wrong, I can't get enough of **Shemar Moore's** little hairy 6-pack, but not at an award show. I blame **Jennifer Lopez** for all of this. Even **Mary J. Blige** had her Jenny-top on. I ain't mad atcha . . .

Rodney "Dark Child" Jerkins has penned hits for Whitney, Brandy, Monica and others. This time he's doing it for himself. *So Plush* is the name of Jerkin's all-girl group and Nigelica stamps her seal of approval on this one. Be the first on your block, in your office or in your dorm to pump this CD and I guarantee you people are immediately gonna ask you who is it and where they can get their copy.

TINA PAUL

For all of you who have laid **Toni Braxton** down because of her financial transition, it's time to pick up your face because she's is back in a Millennium-kinda way. Yes, Girlfriend has hit the music biz hard. The title of this CD is *The Heat* and the first single "He Wasn't Man Enough," produced by **Rodney**

Ruth Ellis (l) and her lover of 30 years, Cecilene "Babe" Franklin; circa 1930.

SUNDANCE

Sundance Channel, the premiere television destination for film experience, celebrates gay pride with its June Film Fest, "Out Loud," showcasing gay and lesbian themed films. Sundance has aired the T.V. premiere of Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100 and the film will air again during pride. The life of the oldest living African-American lesbian unfolds in this inspiring documentary by award-winning filmmaker Yvonne Welbon. Ellis's life as an independent businesswoman and as the proud 30-year companion of Cecilene "Babe" Franklin, is presented in filmed interviews, archival footage and dramatic recreations. This invaluable look at part of our neglected past won the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the 1999 San Francisco international Gay & Lesbian Film Festival. The Sundance channel is available in all markets 24 hours a day. To request the channel viewers may call 1-800-SUN-FILM. Check for listings at www.sundancechannel.com

'Ain't Miss Behavin'

After achieving a level of success that few female hip hop performers have ever attained, Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliott's bank account is indeed bulging. Her lastest single from Da Real World - the controversial "She's A Bitch," also confirms that Missy and her trusted producer Timbaland have once again raised the hip hop standard.

So everybody wants to know what's up with Missy? Some may be scratching their heads at the "bitch" monker, but all are uncontrollably slinking to its rolling groove, miming the throw-away trail of verses that are pure, unadulterated Missy. As one of the few music stars to successfully navigate the rap, pop and R & B worlds without bowing to any of them, Missy has taken rap's testosterone-fueled B-word, and inverted its meaning. She's camoflaged her etheral ability to flex words and thrown a fast ball.

"Females in the business aren't taken as seriously as we should be," she tells *Venus*. "So, in order to be heard, we'll often assume a character and give off what one would call a 'diva' or 'bitch' attitude. When a man does it he's called aggressive and its a positive thing. A bitch is what they call a woman who knows what she wants. If I got to check you loud and clear, that's what I'm going to do. I'm showing you what it's like to come off like that."

TINA PAUL

Travel the World of Emotions with Brenda Russell

The exceptional songwriting talents of Brenda Russell is showcased again in her much anticipated debut release which can only be described as pure elegance. "Paris Rain," on Russell's new label, Hidden Beach Recordings, is enriched with sophistication, romance, and an indescribable atmosphere of tranquility.

Russell was influenced early on by her parents, both musicians. Her mother is a song writer and singer and her father is a singer and a drummer. Russell grew up being exposed to a variety of music in her home which helped to develop her sense of harmony. Venus recently had the chance to speak with Ms. Russell from her California home.

Venus: How did you come up with the name Paris Rain?

Ms. Russell: "Russell Ferante' of The Yellow Jackets and Will Kennedy, who at that time was also a member, wrote the music to this song for their Yellow Jackets CD. They asked me to write the lyrics. When they played this song, I immediately started crying, it was so unbelievably beautiful, all I could do was cry. They kinda started laughing because they were so excited that I was so moved. So I'm crying and they're laughing. It was kind of a funny scene. I said to them, 'You know I'd have to go to Paris to write for a song like this, it's so Parisian.' I drove around with that music in my car and then it came to me, 'Love In Paris Rain.' I wrote the lyrics and then I thought, Paris Rain would be a great title for the CD."

Venus: We just love your duet on, 'You Can't Hide Your Heart from Me.' What inspired you to work with singer Carl Anderson again?

Ms. Russell: "Oh, Carl is a special person in my life, a very dear friend. He once invited me to hear him sing at a church he belonged to. I went to hear him sing and I immediately fell in love with the church and the people and started attending. As a result of being there so many wonderful things have happened in my life. He gave me such an amazing gift. I just had to do something special for him in return, so I invited him to sing on my record.

Venus: I'm so glad you invited him. It's one of my favorite 'quiet storm' picks. Who were some of the key players on this project.

Ms. Russell: "Oh Great! Glad you asked. There's so many marvelous people, I've got Sheila E playing drums on a song called "Walking in New York" which has a real, fun, Latin kinda vibe. Kirk Whalum, whose a great saxophonist and Gregg Phillanganes who's a very famous keyboardist who has played with everyone from Michael Jackson to Quincy Jones. Carole King and myself co-wrote "Move the Moon." This was a big thrill for me. She is a major inspiration for me. Ivanlins from Brazil and I collaborated on the song entitled "Please Felipe."

Venus: Your song "Baby Eyes" is on a movie soundtrack and you're featured in the movie. Tell us about it.

Ms. Russell: It's a Barry Levinson

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Dred King Exposing the Bulge

"I sometimes do drag king make-over workshops at schools and universities. I think everybody should try it at least once."

Daunted by the subway ride from my office to the Village, I arrived at the Angelika theater, to meet Mildred Gerestant (her surname that she pronounces with a French inflection) for an interview.

In the theater's cafe, I marveled at the petite, bald, dark-skinned woman with very high cheekbones and a sweet, light, voice I'd never met before. Her mack, pimp daddy-supa fly character, however, I'd seen on stage at last year's NYC Black Pride opening ceremony, and at a club where she'd performed as Busta Rhymes with drag queen Lusicious' Janet Jackson.

Brooklyn-born and raised with Haitian ancestry, she's been performing as a drag king, or "gender illusionist," since December 1995.

She also acts and sings. It has been with her drag king act that she's had the most opportunistic fun and has performed in Germany, Holland, Austria, Switzerland and various cities across the U.S.

Of her decision to perform in drag, she said that she'd gone to a bar to see a drag king performance once and left feeling empowered and inspired to do it. It was six months later before she actually decided to put a bulge in her panties. Buster Hymen, a former drag king, taught Mildred how to apply facial hair which now takes her a speedy fifteen minutes. She draws an outline on her face, applies spirit gum and completes the illusion with chopped-up packaged hair. As her first man-role, even her friends didn't recognize her as she went about introducing herself in true mack daddy form.

Mildred has won many drag contests in New York and has also made television appearances on such shows as Ricki Lake and Maury Povich.

"I sometimes do drag king make-over workshops at schools and universities. I think everybody should try it at least once. You don't have to go out."

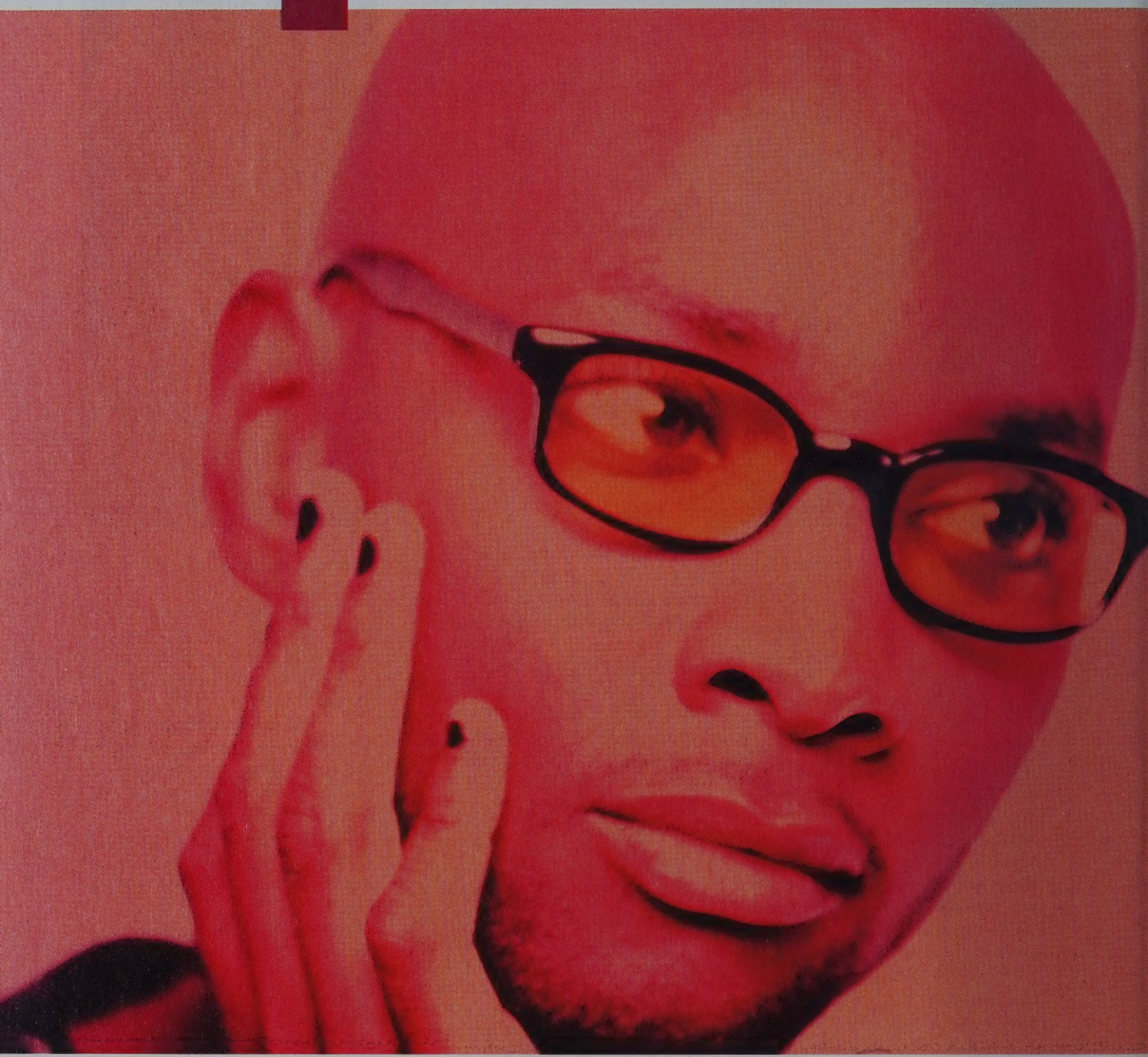
Not all drag queens or cross-dressers are gay. So we asked if it were safe to assume she is a lesbian?

"Aaaah, can we turn this [pocket recorder] off for a second?" [hesitating...] "Yes, coincidentally, I am lesbian as well. I've never been with a man, actually. I always knew that I liked women since

continued on pg 66

Punks

By Lincoln Pettaway



Promoting his directorial debut film, *Punks*, has been no small feat for independent film producer Patrick Ian-Polk. "It is grueling," Polk replied when asked how the film tour was going.

"The promotion of the film is just as important as the production, but right now I would love two solid weeks in my own home." Polk continued, "I don't have the luxury of a press junket and a film like this is more grassroots; you have to do more of the promotion as you go along."

The story, about a group of four close friends and the support they offer one another opens at a birthday party for one of them, Hill, who catches his French lover, Gilbert, kissing another man. Hill immediately moves out of their apartment and in with his close friend, Marcus, an accomplished photographer. Dante and Chris -- the other friends in this circle -- along with Marcus, rally around Hill to help lift his spirits.

Marcus, played by Seth Gilliam (you might remember him from the "Cosby Show"), falls madly in love with Darby, his beautiful, straight neighbor, played by Rockmond Dunbar (who has appeared in "Felicity" and "The Pretender").

Polk's ensemble is successful throughout the film. We move from character to character effortlessly, like a soap opera. Love, sex and friendship are negotiated throughout the film. One can't help but notice the genius behind the actors.

Loretta Devine [*Waiting to Exhale*] plays a health counselor and gives a memorable performance for the brief moments we see her on the screen. Devine and a black nurse who shows up at the end become the voices that speak to us about HIV and AIDS; they become the vehicles through which common sense information about HIV and AIDS is shared.

"I don't know if it was exactly planned since I didn't have time to write the family lives of each character but, I wanted to include a black woman or mother figure when I wrote the role," explained Polk. "The way I dealt with it [HIV/AIDS]in this movie was not in a very direct way. I think that there are people living with HIV and that they are living successfully with it. I think that the way to best deal with it is to naturally integrate it into everyday life."

After graduating from Brandeis University, Polk completed his graduate work at the prestigious University of Southern California School of Cinema-Television. While in school he worked on television series like "SeaQuest" as a producer's assistant and got his feet wet in the industry at MTV as a development executive in its Paramount feature film division. While there he helped to develope *Beavis* and *Butthead Do America* and black comedy, *Election*.

Since he has been with Edmonds Entertainment Polk has had the opportunity to watch *Soul Food* become a breakthrough success putting Kenneth "Babyface" and Tracey Edmonds' entertainment enterprise on the map. It was Polk who brought their next movie project, *Hav Plenty* to the attention of Edmonds' management team which released the film for mainstream distribution along with Miramax Films and E2 Filmworks. The 27 year old director was recently promoted at Edmonds Entertainment to Vice President of Production and Development for its new independent film company, E2 Filmworks.

It was no surprise to anyone when Polk brought Tracey and Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds the script to *Punks* and they agreed to produce the film.

"Patrik brought a lot of passion to this project," says producer, Tracey Edmonds. "He knew exactly what he wanted on every aspect of the production, from its casting to the locations and even the sound editing. We saw in Patrik an extraordinary talent and commitment, and we were anxious to collaborate with him on *Punks*.

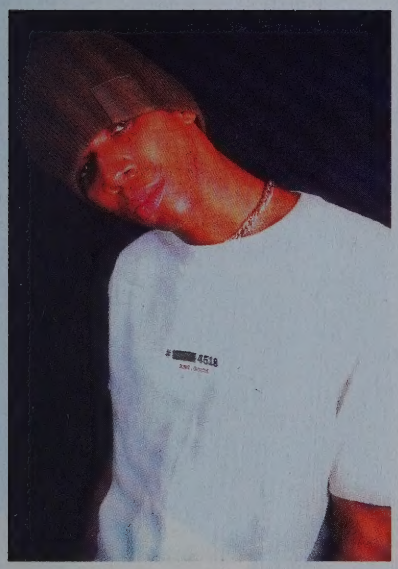
"This movie was always intended to be the definitive depiction of the black gay experience."

Lately, Polk has been thinking about the next three months of traveling that he has in front of him and all that it entails. Before it is all over he will have presented his film at The Sundance Film Festival and The Seattle International Film Festival. Already presented in Cleveland, the film has won the Cleveland International Film Festival award.

"This movie was always intended to be the definitive depiction of the black gay experience," Polk explained. *Punks* realisticaly portrays African-American gay men, quite possibly, for the first time on the silver screen .

Lincoln Pettaway is a freelance writer residing in Cleveland, OH.

Selling Harmonica Sunbeam's Package



The cock-sure, dramatic persona of Harmonica Sunbeam never fails to make her admirers guffaw at her quick wit, deadpan delivery of topical humor and the rare occasion when she reads some misbehaving audience member.

We met for this interview at a club in downtown Jersey City where she performs. Harmonica was off tonight, but I would meet with her creator, Dorian Bryant. a slender teenager. Bryant wore a puffy, orange downy jacket, black jeans and brogans of the same color. His knit cap, emblazoned with "chocolatino" across the front, covered the top of his face. Although he is 31, he looked like a teenager. When we sat at the bar, I notice that he doesn't look directly at me when he spoke. Was it just his manner, or did it portend something else?

In spite of his youthful looks, Bryant has been in the business for nine years, since he finished high school and began coming out. Back then, he hung out in New York City's Greenwich Village, got caught up in teh House scene and adored *Paris is Burning.* This led him to "walk a ball" in drag. After attending several drag shows, he took the plunge and became a drag professional.

"It was a slow and rough road, but it worked itself out," he told *Venus.*

Had this road led to mistaken impressions of him? we asked. His reply was a cautionary tale signalling that things are not what they seem.

"Mistaken impression?" he mused. "That I want to be a woman; that I like to dress up in women's clothing and that I would show up to meet them somewhere dressed as a woman. That's not what I'm about. I am strictly business and I see this as a job. When the job is over, I'm out of my uniform."

Three young ladies, one with an inflated mylar balloon, pass by and hearing the bass-heavy hip hop beats outside decide to come in. Dorian times how long it will take them to leave after the doorman tells them it's gay night. They do leave, but have a discussion with each other on a corner nearby and then re-enter the club. We both laugh.

"It's the same with some of the guys," he says. Three guys would enter the club and immediately leave after they hear it's gay night. But one of them would return the very next week . . . without his buddies.

Bryant sometimes gets peturbed when he is recognized out of drag and club patrons call out "Hey, Harmonica."

"I tend to be a shy person," he said. "When I'm not dressed [in drag] I'm very shy. For someone to call me out character pisses me off. Even if they don't know my real name, there are ways of doing something. It's like outing me as everyone doesn't know what I do or who I am and I kinda like it that way. There's a time and place for everything and not every√one always handles it in the same way, so I have to adjust."

"I enjoy what I do and making people happy. There are times when people approach me after the show and tell me of situations going on in their lives where they are not having the best day and how they felt much better after the show."

The sky is the limit for Dorian's Harmonica Sunbeam. His main goal for 2000 is to broaden and go a bit more mainstream. "If someone feels you're marketable they can use you in different venues," referencing RuPaul's career. "You have to be properly packaged. I'm looking for the proper management or agent. I'm proud of what I've accomplished so far. I've taken this from a hobby to where I've done a lot of traveling and do a lot of things I would have never done. I'm blessed."

_SVD

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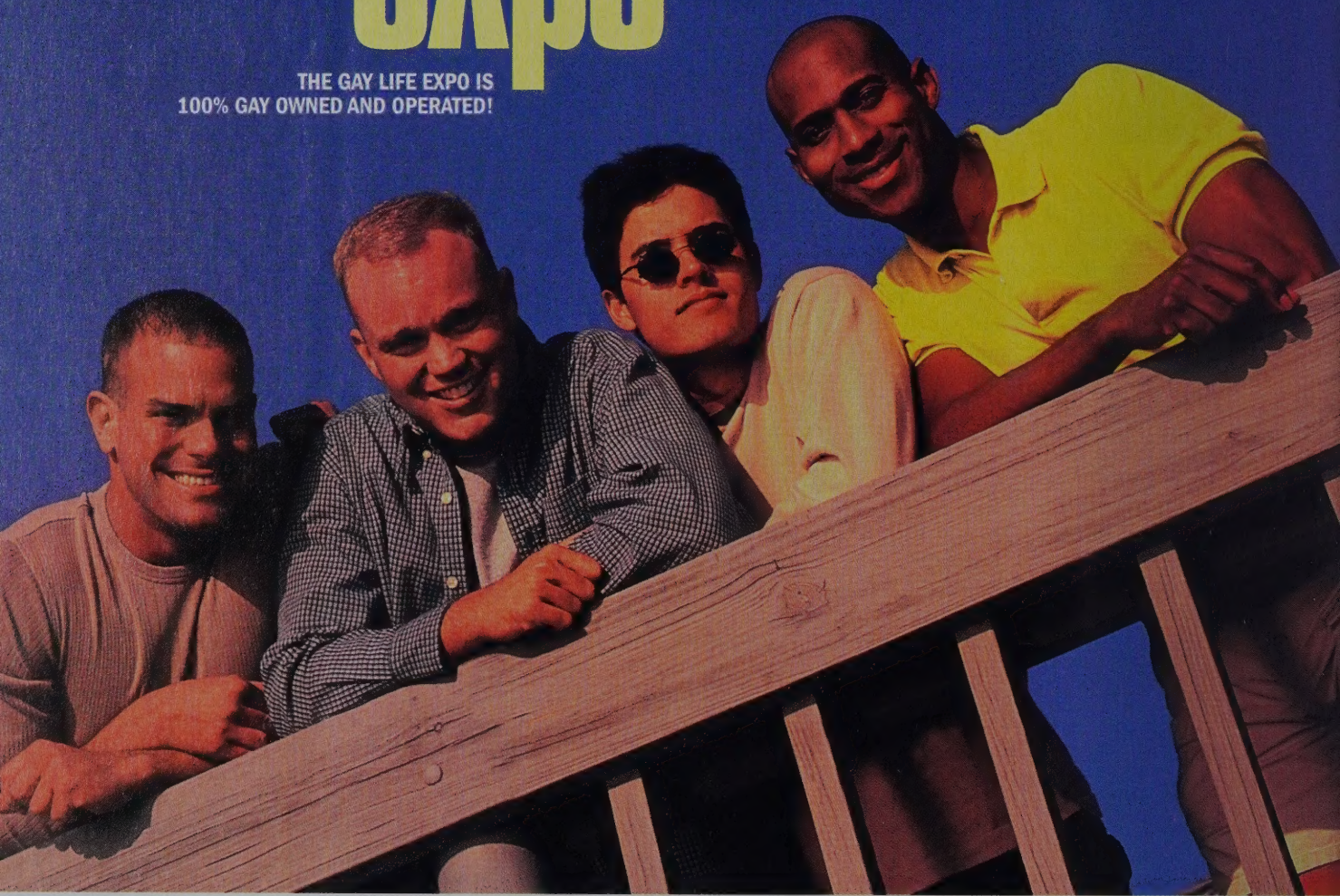

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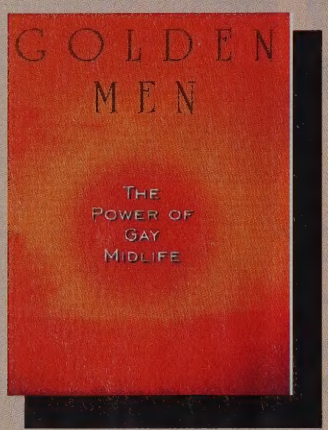
GOLDEN MEN The Power Of Gay Midlife

by Harold Kooden, Ph.D. with Charles Flowers
Avon Books



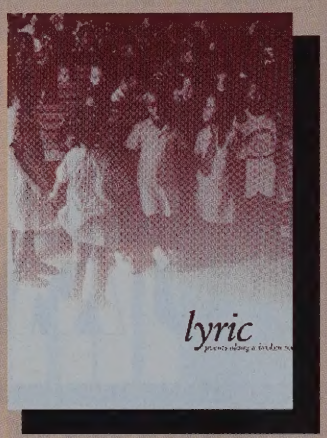
The definitive book on the specific challenges gay men face at midlife. Perhaps nowhere is the American obsession with beauty and glorification of youth more prevalent than in gay male culture. Aging, however, is an inescapable fact of life. Negativity and prejudices about this inevitable process can often result in a midlife misspent in self-loathing and despair.

Noted gay psychotherapist Dr. Harold Kooden draws on new research and his vast professional experience to separate facts from fears, as he examines aging and its impact on key areas of gay life: body image and sexuality; physical and spiritual health; work and play; friendships and relationships.

For the first openly gay generation in the U.S. entering a new life stage, this remarkable book offers help, strength, support, and direction -- revealing how the skills mastered in a hard-won struggle for survival, recognition, and respect can play an important part in every gay man's empowerment and acceptance of himself in midlife.

LYRICS: Poems Along A Broken Road

selected poems by G. Winston James
GrapeVine Press



A distinctive new poetic voice from this more than thirteen-year tradition of passion and excellence ... one of the few full-length collections of poetry from an African-American gay male in nearly a decade. *Lyric* stirs the soul using images grounded in nature; it unveils and celebrates the wonderful in the everyday. Provocative and varied, it allows readers to travel along the "broken road" from exile to empowerment, loneliness to love, and loss to salvation. Recently nominated for the Lambda Literary Award for Poetry, *Lyric* is a moment in Black literary history that promises to endure.

Re-Viewing James Baldwin Things Not Seen

Edited by D. Quentin Miller
Forward by David adams Leeming
review by Lincoln Pettaway

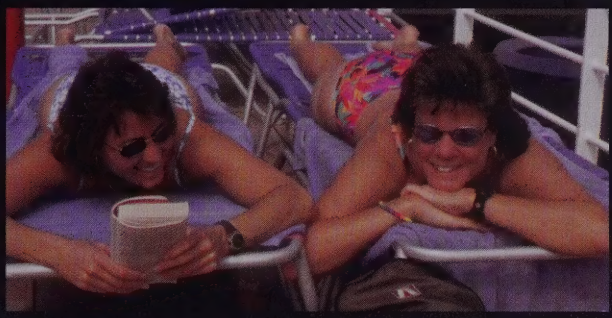
In this collection of essays on Baldwin's work, neither Baldwin's inability to reconcile his relationship with his country as a black man, nor his relationship to the black community (due to sexual orientation) are the main focus. Instead, *Re-Viewing James Baldwin* is about Baldwin's ability to express the multi-level conflicts which confront all people.

This collection of essays examine identity, sexuality, visual representational and religious ideology in relationship to Baldwin the man and his work. Most importantly, *Re-Viewing James Baldwin, Things Not Seen,* is a collection of accessible essays, that you can read and understand.

Sisterfriend Soul Journeys:

The Spirit and Expressions of African American Women on Tour
by Maria D. Dowd with an introduction by Iyanla Vanzant
PROMOTrends, Inc. June, 2000

Sisterfriend Soul Journeys is a personal invitation to join a woman-centered journey to empowerment and inner peace. Best-selling authors, corporate and community leaders, artist, healers, motivational speakers. and spiritual teachers were gathered together by Maria Denise Dowd. Dowd is the founder and executive producer of African American Women on Tour, the nation's foremost empowerment conference for Black women. The book is a profoundly powerful collection of inspirational stories, peoms and essays about healing, personal growth and spirtual insight.



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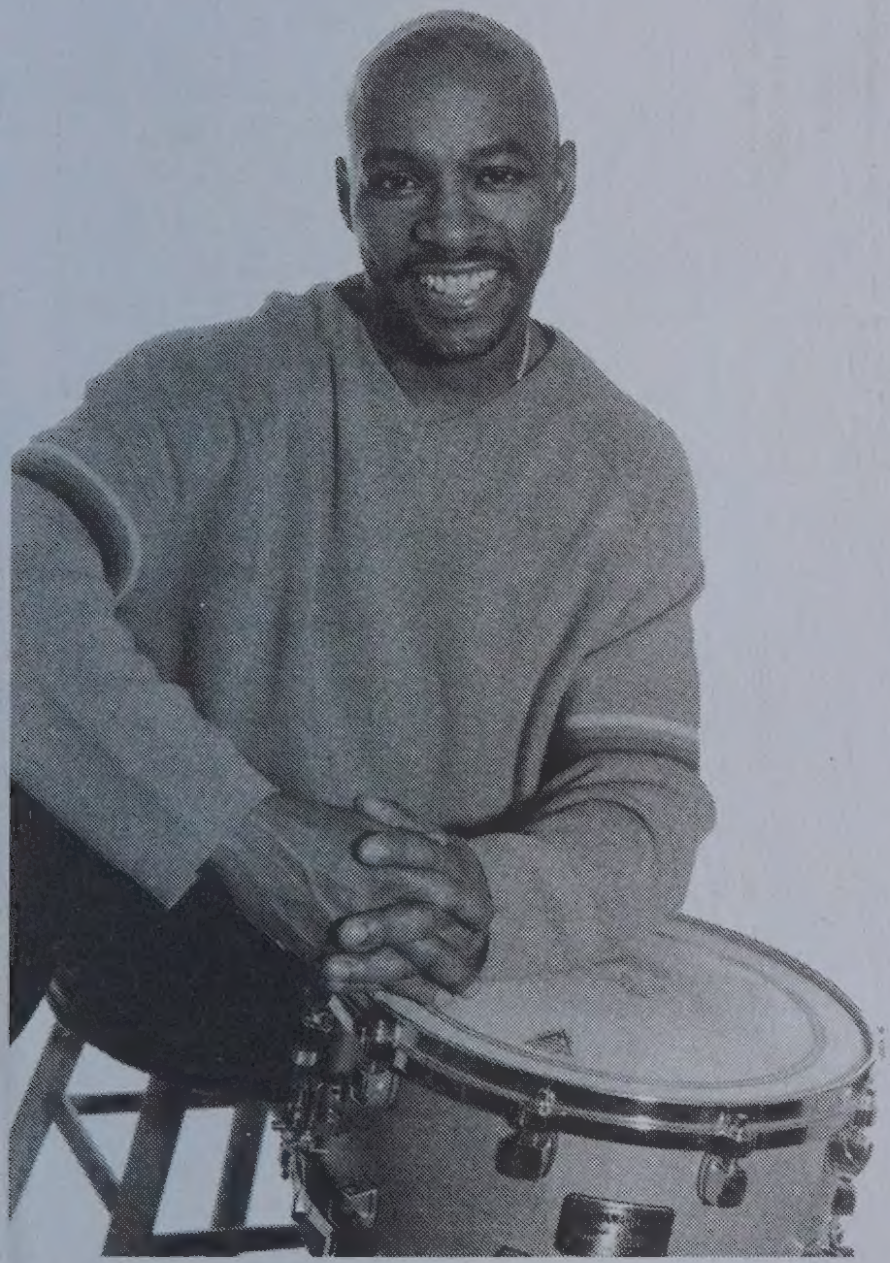

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Black Methodist Church
Opens Its Doors to Gays

by Robert Wyckoff

After the Revolutionary War an increasing number of blacks, both slave and free, joined churches with predominantly white congregations. The whites, uncomfortable with the African-style of worship -- with its hand-clapping and rhythmic accompaniment, vigorous singing and the custom of shouting and praying aloud as the Spirit so moved them throughout the service -- arranged for segregated seating, segregated services and communion.

In 1818 'colored' members of Bromfield Methodist petitioned the New England Conference to send Samuel Snowden, a 'colored' speaker from Portland, Maine, to Boston to minister to them. The growing congregation had moved from meeting in private homes to a storefront on Beacon Hill and eventually saved up enough money -- literally, a nickel at a time for 20 years -- and purchased Union Congregational Church on the corner of West Newton Street and Columbus Avenue in 1949.

"I want to be connected with a church where I can be all of who I am: a Black man, a gay man, an educated man, and most importantly, a man who is totally in love with God"

In the 70's and 80's Union held fast to its commitment to the social issues of racial equality and civil rights. Held at Union, the Annual Martin Luther King Breakfast, the first in the nation, has over the years become a forum for issues in the Black and minority community and "required" attendance for politicians, both local and those based in Washington, D.C.

The continuing struggle that began over 200 years ago as a movement to end the enslavement of a race has expanded in recent years to include changing the attitudes, institutions, and laws that oppress all kinds of people because of their complexion, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.

The process which led to the recent unanimous decision by Union's Church Council to adopt a "Statement as a Reconciling and Inclusive Church" began in a Membership Class in 1996 where one of the congregational members asked, "Where does the United Methodist Church stand on the issue of homosexuality?"

In 1992 the United Methodist Church General Conference authorized a 24 person commission comprising of laity and clergy of varying positions to be formed to investigate the issues related to homosexuality. For nearly four years the commission took testimony from "biblical scholars, theologians and ethnicists"

...continued on pg. 66

The Beat Behind Luther

Ivan Hampden, Jr.

By Nigel Jackson

Photography by De Alan Wilson Studios

The new CD entitled *Gift From Above* on World Blue Records distributed by Platinum is a special collection of soul-stirring street music that's intended to make all within ear shot feel real good. A few of the featured artist are Luther Vandross, George Benson, Will Downing and Chaka Khan. All the ingredients for a hit. The heartbeat behind the music . . . Ivan Hampden, Jr. (Pepe). Hampden began playing drums at the tender age of 8. By 13 he was playing blues in clubs in and around NYC. Ivan grew up paying close attention to the rhythms of R&B, Salsa and Jazz. He began his formal training in 1973 at The Jazz Mobile with Charlie Persip, and at Mannes College with Norman Grossman. In 1977, he took private lessons at the Metropolitan Opera with Richard Horowitz through the Bronx Community College. Ivan is considered by major music giants, as an accomplished percussionist, drummer and proficient studio musician. He's also an educator. He teaches drums and percussions at the Dance Theater of Harlem, The Harlem School of Arts, and the Black music department at Seaton Hall.

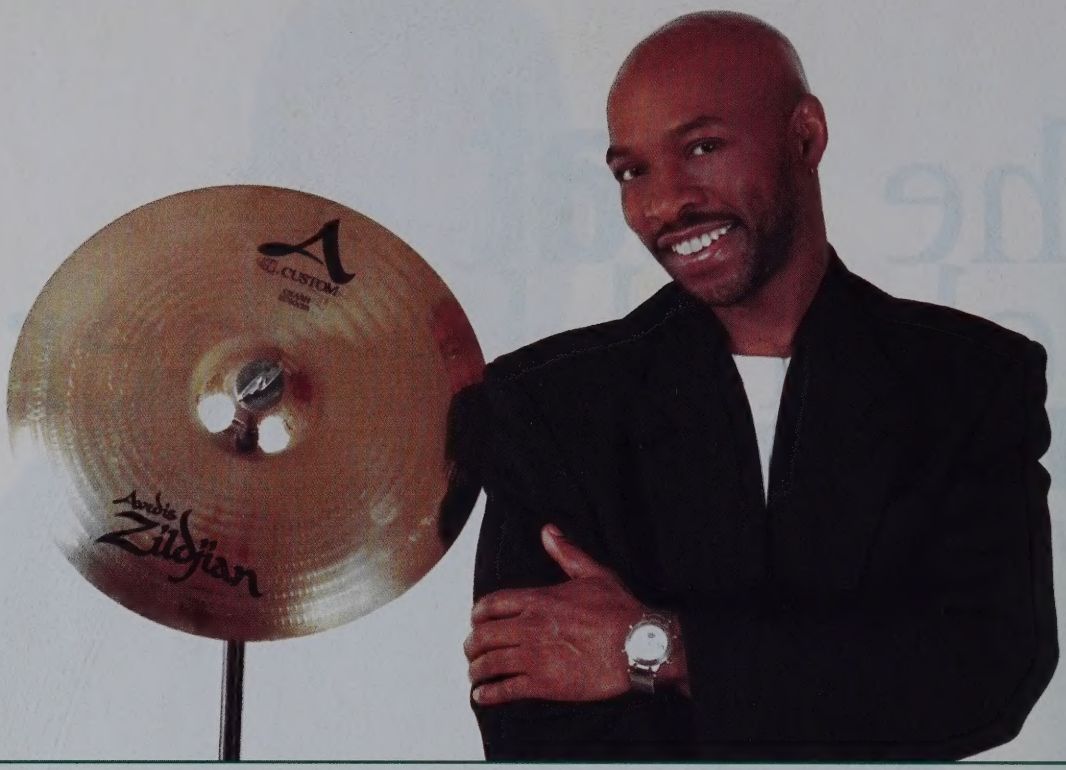
This sexy, Harlem-born Aries just finished touring with Vanessa Williams, Jennifer Lopez and Roberta Flack. When Hampden's not touring, recording, producing, or teaching, he's on television. He played on the "Tonight Show" with Jay Leno, "Late Nite" with David Letterman, the "Rosie O'Donnell Show," and The Grammy's.

Hampden's professional and personal relationship with the legendary Luther Vandross spans for more than 12 years. He has cowritten, produced and played with Vandross on the nationally acclaimed wedding anthem "Here and Now," as well as "Power Of Love," "Your Secret Love," and "This Christmas." He has also written, produced and played on hits for Diana Ross, Anne Nesby and Jocelyn Brown's "Somebody Else's Guy." We asked Hampden to pick one track that showcases his raw talent. He chose Mavis Staples "Why" on Paisley Park records.

Hampden has definitely 'made it'. We asked him about his most difficult challenges along the road to success. His answer------ racism.

Venus: How does discrimination in the music industry affect black musicians?

Hampden: It's truly alive, that's for sure. It affects us in an economical way. It hits entertainers in the pockets. There's a very distinct color line in this business and it's painted from the top all the way to the bottom. In New York, musicians can make excellent salaries doing, Broadway plays, jingles, television commercials and a whole slew of projects that mostly target predominately white audiences. Unfortunately, most black musicians don't get called to do these jingles unless the cat they hired is not giving them what they need. I can go in there and play my butt off and play every style in the book but they're not going to call me unless they really need me because their guy can't do it.



"Musicians can make excellent salaries doing Broadway plays, jingles, television commercials and a whole slew of projects."

There's a lot of that in this business. On the Broadway scene you have these contractors in place that are hooked up with the musicians unions. On Broadway you really have to know somebody. You gotta really get in there because there aren't many black musicians in the pit.

Venus: What's the benefit in playing these kinda gigs?

Hampden: Major paper! You make incredible money, you get to stay at home and make a couple of grand a week. It's a very relaxed scene when you can do those kinda gigs and because it's a union gig which means it builds up in your pension. The union is catch 22. If you're in a musician's union and you're working union gigs you're eligible for full health benefits, ect. But you gotta have a steady flow of money and in order to generate a steady flow we need union gigs and that's were discrimination is it's strongest. If we get those kinda gigs it's because were doing a Luther Vandross record. It's [discrimination] out there and it's been out there for years.

Venus: When did you first experience it.

Hampden: When I was a young musician coming up, I was very enthusiastic about getting out there and being the best sessions cat out there. I would still wonder why I was passed up for certain kinda gigs.

Venus: How do you escape from it all?

Hampden: Well, right away I think if you have any fire use it. I got angry and realized, OK I gotta be better than all these mother f**kers. I worked hard on my craft and worked with my people i.e., Ashford and Simpson, The Dance Theater of Harlem, Eartha Kitt, Luther Vandross, and Roberta Flack. When working with black artists, eventually you cross the line and get to work with others.

Venus: If we could make one wish come true for you what would it be?

Hampden: All I want is to be able to continue to provide for my family and friends and charm my listeners with some smooth and funky sounds.

Nigel Jackson is president of PSP Entertainment Co., Inc. in Virginia. He manages and produces several R&B artists.

Valerie instructed her assistant, "If Natasha calls, give her the cell phone number, but if it's some woman named Cheryl...voicemail."

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Sex Talk

Q: My lover and I have been together for more than two years and I love her very much, The conflict that I have with her is our sex life. She is 11 years older than I and the sexual energy I have surpasses hers. I don't know how to express to her that she doesn't completely satisfy me. I get sexually frustrated at times and just choose not to engage in anything. I don't want my desires to destroy our relationship, and I don't want to be tempted by anyone else either, but I lie awake at times just desiring so much more, Can you help us?

Q: I have been in a same-sex relationship a little over four years. I am happy with my life partner. However, it has become quite apparent that we view sex differently. He loves and wants to have sex quite often. I can really care less about having sex on any regular basis. He believes that I am not interested in him; this is not true. I've tried to explain that I just am not interested in sex all the time. I don't want him to look elsewhere for sex. Is there anything I can do to increase my desire for sex?

A: Sexual desire and/or sexual drive are very individualistic and vary from person to person, regardless of age. Accordingly, it is seldom the case that any two people in a relationship have exacting sexual levels. And yes, this does pose certain challenges. However, what many couples might bear in mind is that in the early stages of the relationship, sex, seemingly, was not of issue. And, though the early stage is considered the "honeymoon stage" which is, usually, temporary, there are certain aspects of it that are significant and support this stage of the relationship. Couples in this stage delight and revel in the presence and touch of one another. Couples take time out to plan rendezvous. They do thoughtful little things for one another. They surprise and carefully attend to one another, in detail.. They cajole and seduce one another.

All in all, there is much time and energy set forth behaviorally and situationally during this stage. Is it any wonder that it is so exciting and such a "turn-on?" However, as time and couples progress, there is a tendency to "settle in" and find that comfort zone with one another. And, all too often, take each other for granted. With the "status quo" in place, so, too, is the sex. Therefore, it is important to recapture and incorporate elements of the

"honeymoon stage".

For those of you who have high libidos, an initial direct sexual approach toward a partner who is only lukewarm may appear to be a demand or elicit an obligatory stance by your partner. Instead, take some time to create a mood that may attract your partner's attention. It may be as simple as a candlelight picnic on the living room floor, or, perhaps as exciting as flying to a neighboring city for dinner only. Be creative, be thoughtful. Notice and say things to your partner that allow them to feel their own sexiness. For instance, "I enjoy how alluring you look in that outfit". If they feel sexy, the probability is that they will be more sexual. The point here is that people who feel less driven sexually, may occasionally, need the more driven partner to awaken their sexual appetite.

Now, for those of you with a lesser sex drive, know that it is important to please your partner's desires; even on occasions when you are less interested. Very often, once you have involved yourself, your own libido charges up. However, it is not recommended that you regularly push yourself into sexual behaviors. This could have detrimental psychological consequences. It is also important that you become aware of the moods, situations, behaviors etc. that awaken you sexually. Provide those for yourself, as well as be clear with your mate as to what induces you. Both people need to communicate readily and plentifully about their sexual concerns, but never in bed, during sex. This may cause an association between the bedroom and issues.

Yes, make the special time, and do the exciting things that once made it all happen. Make that romantic specialness a part of your day-to-day world, and more sex will follow as that loving emotional connection renews and strengthens. However, I must add should your sexual relationship not be enlivened by these methods, couples and/or sex therapy may be in order. Couples and/or sex therapy may assist with the exploration of possible issues that may exist outside of the bedroom. Sex can be as simple as a new position or represent more complicated concerns. And no, sex is not the entirety of the relationship. However, once that satisfying combination is found in your relationship, it opens many doors toward a more loving relationship.

Geanie Bond is a licensed therapist practicing in Atlanta, GA. She specializes in hypnosis and sex therapy. Call 404-256-6709 to contact her directly. Out-of-state calls welcome. Email SexTalk@venus magazine.com

Cosmic Rhythms

by Joy Isoke, *Intuitive Astrologer*

Where we travel throughout the world has an impact on our state of being. Have you noticed how you felt when you traveled to a different region in the United States or left the country? There are some places that are better suited for your well being than others.

The astrological study of locations and their effects is called Astro-Carto-Graphy. Your birth chart and the longitude/latitude of the location in which you are interested enables an astrologer to interpret your planetary influences of that area. This information can also be used to predict the type of experience you may have there.

For example, I recently lived in Atlanta, Georgia. I thought it was a beautiful place and I loved the soulful environment. But for some reason I could not feel at peace. After doing my location chart, I realized that Atlanta was in my Saturn zone. Saturn is a planet of solitude, restriction, depression and of course, responsibility. During my stay in Atlanta, I found my self feeling very lonely and depressed even though there was so much to do. After I moved to Arizona, a cloud was lifted from my world. I had moved to my Sun zone. Your Sun zone is the place where you can shine and be your true self.

Throughout life's transitions, we may find ourselves desiring to travel to different places and not be fully conscious of the reason why. But cosmically, we are traveling to the zone that will offer us the necessary vibration to further our soul's evolution. People have been known to move into totally different cultures across the globe and feel more familiar than they did at home. They have found there place under the Sun.

The point that I wish to make is that all places on Earth have a significant vibration. The latitude and longitude of an area relates to the celestial sky as well. We are drawn to be exactly where we need to be at every given location. The key is to realize what you need to achieve while you are there. Ask yourself what are the lessons or skills you need to acquire to further your life. If a place does not feel right to you, it probably isn't. Give yourself an adjustment period. If there is still no peace, it's probably time to move on. The experiences you have in any location will be a reflection of the energy you need to address within yourself. Come to terms with those issues and let them go.

For those of you who have been staying in one place and have desired to go somewhere else - listen to the still voice of your soul. It is trying to tell you where it needs to go. Astrologically, the Earth is part of a complex system called the Solar System. All of the planets' vibrations are experienced on Earth. As above, so below. One of the keys to successful living is finding the place on Earth that is best suited for your needs. A place where you can truly shine.

Q: My partner and I recently moved to a Midwestern city. She is doing just fine and I am miserable. What can I do to adjust?

A: Your options are many. But from an astrological point of view, find out what zone you are in according to your life. Your partner may be experiencing just what s/he needs, but you may not. If you find that you are miserable and depressed in this location, the both of you need to seek other choices. My point being, your happiness is as important as your partner's. You will do better as a couple in a place that is well suited for both of you.

Joy Isoke resides in Scottsdale Arizona. To learn more about her astrological services email JIIA@juno.com.

Astrology Research Project

Volunteers are needed to assist in a research project on Astrology & Homosexuality. You must be homosexual or bisexual to participate. I am researching whether astrology can be used to determine homosexuality. You will receive your Birth Chart and an Astrological Profile free of charge. Interested? Please send birth data (date, time, place) and mailing address to: Joy Isoke, Intuitive Astrologer P.O. Box 9481, Scottsdale, AZ 85252-9481 or e-mail: JIIA@juno.com Tel: 480.949.0022

Making Music and **Mending Minds**

Rosalind C. Lloyd

The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival celebrates its 25th anniversary from August 8 - 13. This year's festival is taking place in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. More than 40 acts will perform on three stages continuously. Some of this year's attractions are: Toshi Reagon and Big Lovely, Drumsong Orchestra with Ubaka Hill, and One World Inspirational Choir. There will be folk, rock, and punk musical performances as well as other artistic efforts. These include dance, theater, and the spoken word. An international film and video festival featuring works by women filmmakers is also in the offering. Workshop topics include: Feminism in Action, Blood Sisters Politics, Multiple minority, and Fighting Fat Oppression.

Conceived in 1975 to create and define women's culture, the festival springs from two separate events: the Midwest Women's Festival held outdoors in the Ozarks and a weekend music festival held indoors in Boston. Combining the best of both the outdoor and indoor festivals, the Michigan's Womyn's Festival was born. Today, the festival is an amalgamation of multi-generations from babies to women in their 90s gathering together. The festival welcomes all women.

Accommodations at the Music Festival besides cabins include an RV campground, popular, secluded and family camp areas as well as a disabled womyn's resources camp area. With respect to childcare, there is a girls camp, a boys camp (only boys under 10 are permitted to the festival) and a toddler's camp for children up to four years old.

Feeling Campy?

Most of us imagine luxury and relaxation when vacations come to mind. We enjoy the indulgences of amenities--room service and first class dining. However, such vacations can be costly. An inexpensive alternative is camping. Like everything else, there are a number of campgrounds as well as camp-oriented events with a gay and lesbian focus. Here are a few...

Sistah Womyn Summerfest 2000

The Fourth Annual Mid-Atlantic of Color and Many Cultures Music~Spirit Festival is June 9-11 in West Virginia--an hour and a half from Washington, D. C. The festival is sponsored by Amethyst & Indigo, Inc., the national Womyn of Color Foundation for Cultural Exploration, Retention, and Healing through Arts, Education and Outreach.

Events on tap are Honoring our Ancestors Ceremony and an All Night World Beat Dance Party. There will also be workshops with a focus on healing and spiritual rejuvenation. At the Craftwomyn's Extravaganza women can indulge themselves with scented oils and incense. Hand-crafted pottery, sculpture and jewelry are also featured items. A lake on the property is available for canoeing and an Olympic-sized swimming pool is there for those persons who want to splash inside. Basketball, volleyball and tennis courts are available to the athletically inclined. Hiking trails and nature walks along the Blue Ridge Mountains are suggested as more calming activities.

Child care is available for girls of all ages and for boys under age five only. The children's itinerary includes: storytelling, nature walks and splashing around in a kiddy-sized pool.

Accommodations at Sistahfest include cabins with indoor plumbing. Early reservations are suggested). Using tents is also encouraged. Dining is indoors. The average attendance at Sistah Summerfest is between 250 and 400 womyn of color, however only womyn born as womyn and womyn of color are welcome.

In touch, a women's only camp in Virginia, has the most amazing open-air hot showers. Some camps even have on-site bars/discos and stages.

Feeling adventurous?

Pack a friend in the sports utility vehicle and drive up to a campground in **Provincetown**, Mass., right on the beach! Don't forget to pack that bottle of chardonnay. Lobster, among other treats, are delectible on the grill, while a portable CD player bangs with a cache of house along with Me'shell N'deg ocello, D'Angelo, Cree Summers and others to set the mood. Don't wait. The glow of a bonfire, good people, good food, and good fun await with the summer moonlight and the tranquil Atlantic Ocean as your backdrop.

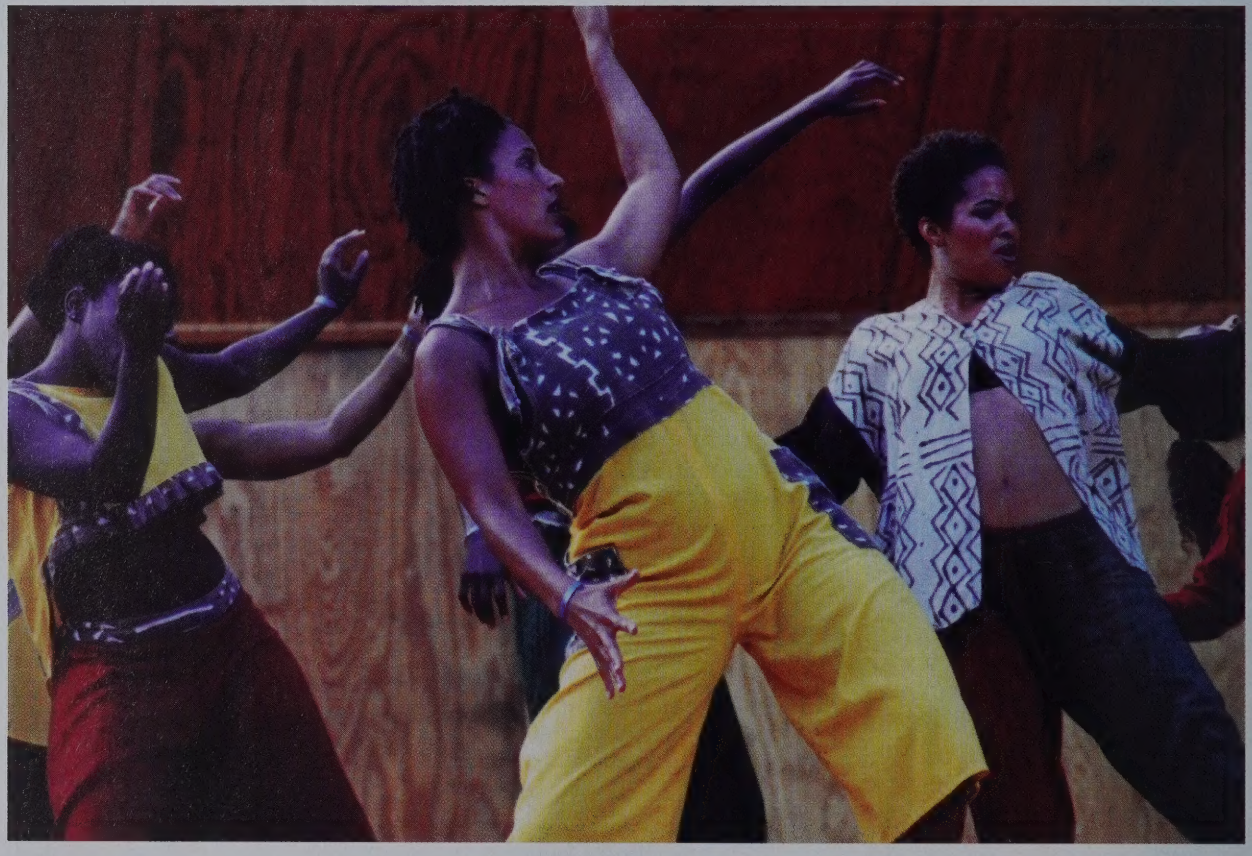
Planning a ceremony ?

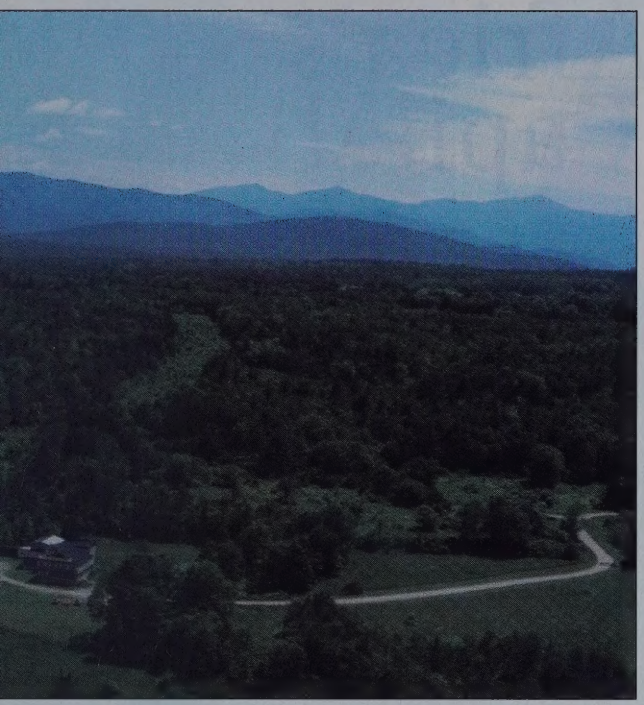
Check out **The Highlands Inn**, a premier lesbian resort in New Hampshire's popular White Mountains. The Highlands is situated at the end of a country lane on a hill overlooking its own 100 acres of woods and fields. Breathtaking mountain and valley views surround the property. The Inn has miles of trails for hiking, bird-watching, or cross-country skiing. This summer, enjoy a 54-foot heated pool, or golf at superb courses near-by.

The accomodations are excellent. A gracious living room and library, large sunny breakfast room, wicker-filled screen porch, and luxurious private whirlpool spa are provided for guests. The 20 guest rooms are individually decorated with antiques and

Women's Camping

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival www.michfest.com (231)-757-4766
SISTAH SummerFest Email:Sistahfest@aol.com www. sistahsummerfest.com or call 301-961-1014.
INTOUCH - Women only camp ground, www.in-touchva.com
The Highlands Inn Call 1-877-LES-B-INN www.highlandsinn-nh.com





The Highlands Inn

comfortable furniture with private baths.

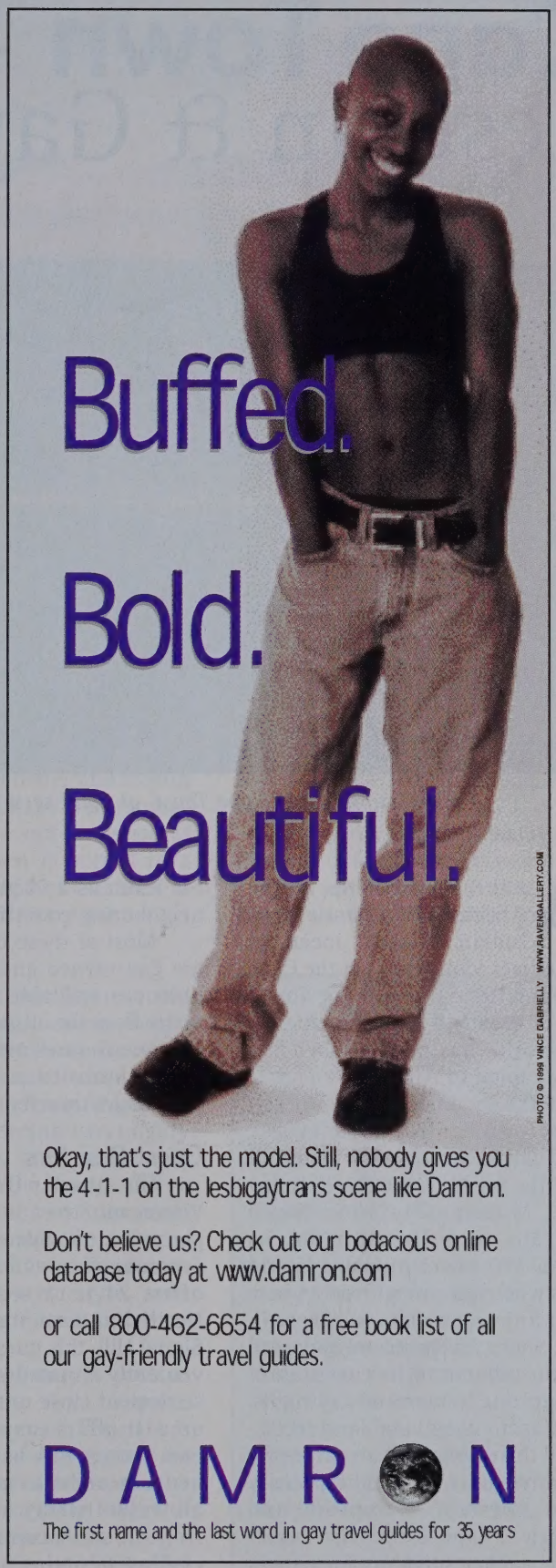
Reserve a room in the main building, the annex, the farm house, or for added privacy, try the rustic cottage equipped with TV/VCR, refrigerator, microwave, queen size sleep sofa and bath on the first floor. An upstairs sleeping loft with queen size bed makes the cottage ideal for 2-4 people. The Inn does not serve dinner but several excellent restaraunts are nearby.

The Highland's annual Spring Fling is the resort's signature Pride event and is celebrated through June 24th with rate specials offered. The Inn also sponsors concert weekends which often sell out early, so plan ahead.

HoneyMooners ?

The Highlands Inn is the perfect place for your romantic getaway! They offer special packages which include your room with private bath, country breakfast, and a basket filled with champagne, chocolates,and other goodies. Go deluxe and have a fresh floral arrangement welcome you or even have breakfast served in bed!

Whether you need to really unwind or you just want to surprise your partner with a wonderful treat, call ahead to make an appointment for a luxurious massage that can be done in the privacy of your room.



Cape Town - Africa's Lesbian & Gay Capital!

by S. Pedrag

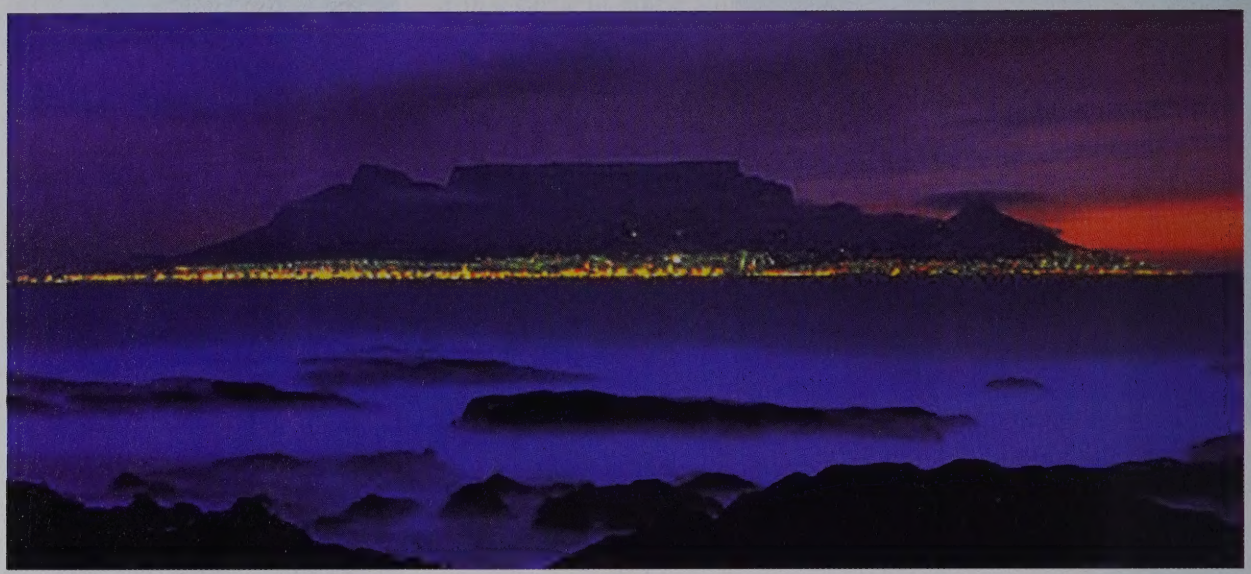


Table Mountain and Cape Town at night seen from Bloubergstrand Beach, South Africa

At the southern tip of the Africa the Atlantic and Indian oceans meet -- sometimes violently -- at the Cape of Good Hope where, Cape Town, one of the most beautiful cities in the world, has been dubbed the "gay capital of Africa."

Since the end of apartheid in 1994, Cape Town has become a favorite destination for tourists from all over the world. Cape Town, called the "Mother City" by South Africans, is well-known for its liberal treatment of lesbians and gays who enjoy more freedom here than anywhere else in Africa. In fact, South Africa recently adopted an amendment to its constitution recognizing lesbian and gay rights.

Capetonians have long recognized this segment of an extremely lucrative tourist market, especially from Western European and America. Cape Town has several travel agencies that organize tours for lesbians and gays in several neighboring countries as well.

Most of these travel agencies are gay-owned and accommodations are available in every price range from the elegant and expensive guesthouses and lodges in the elite suburbs to more modest for the budget traveler.

Guest Quarters

The Quarter GuestHouse, 76 Waterkant Street, is one of the few places that provide exclusively gay accommodations for women and offers 24-hour security service. Nestled against the backdrop of Signal Hill, this guesthouse is conveniently situated in an old Cape settlement close to the Waterfront area. It offers easy access to the club district with bars, discos, hothouse steambaths and restaurants all within twenty meters from its front door. Accommodation, including a continental breakfast is around $50 for a single or around $38 double-occupancy. Visitors may also choose from one of the numerous lesbian and gay -friendly guesthouses or, alternately, opt to rent a posh apartment for two to six people.

Cuisine

Cape Town is probably best known for its seafood dishes. There is a long list of memorable seafood specialties, which when sampled with some of South Africa's famous wines, are quite reasonably priced. Choosy eaters can easily find a delectable dish on the very rich and exotic menus on offer in Cape Town. One may start with Harlem Mussels -- crumbed mussels grilled with garlic served on a bed or rice; Wall Street Salmon with Cream Cheese -- delicious smoked salmon on a bed or crisp garden greens served with home-made brown bread.

© Daryl Benson/Masterfile, © Horst Klemm/Masterfile

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ATLANTIC's Professional 2.0 adds features and lowers prices. The collection includes durable in-line skates, hideaway locking handle system, removable suiter, large easy-to-grip zipper pulls, easy-to-clean fully lined interior. From $99-$199.

Table and chairs in desert at sunset Kubu Island, Botswana

When to Go

The best months to visit Cape Town are February through April, when the temperatures are not as high and the southeasterly winds -- called the "Cape Doctor" -- are no so violent.

A visit to South Africa should not go without caution. In a country where there is a stark difference between the haves and have-nots, incidences of robberies and assault are rather high. Rape is a traumatizing experience and the assault is aggravated when it occurs in a country where 1600 new cases of HIV are recorded every day.

What to See

Your visit to Cape Town should include some of the many tourist attractions. A must-see for all is Table Mountain with its panoramic view of the town. It would be a sin to miss out on seeing two mighty oceans colliding at Cape Point. A trip down the Wine Route offers a wonderful selection of homemade wines. One can sample from dozens of homesteads, built in the characteristic Cape Dutch style, surrounded by magnificent oak trees and vineyards.

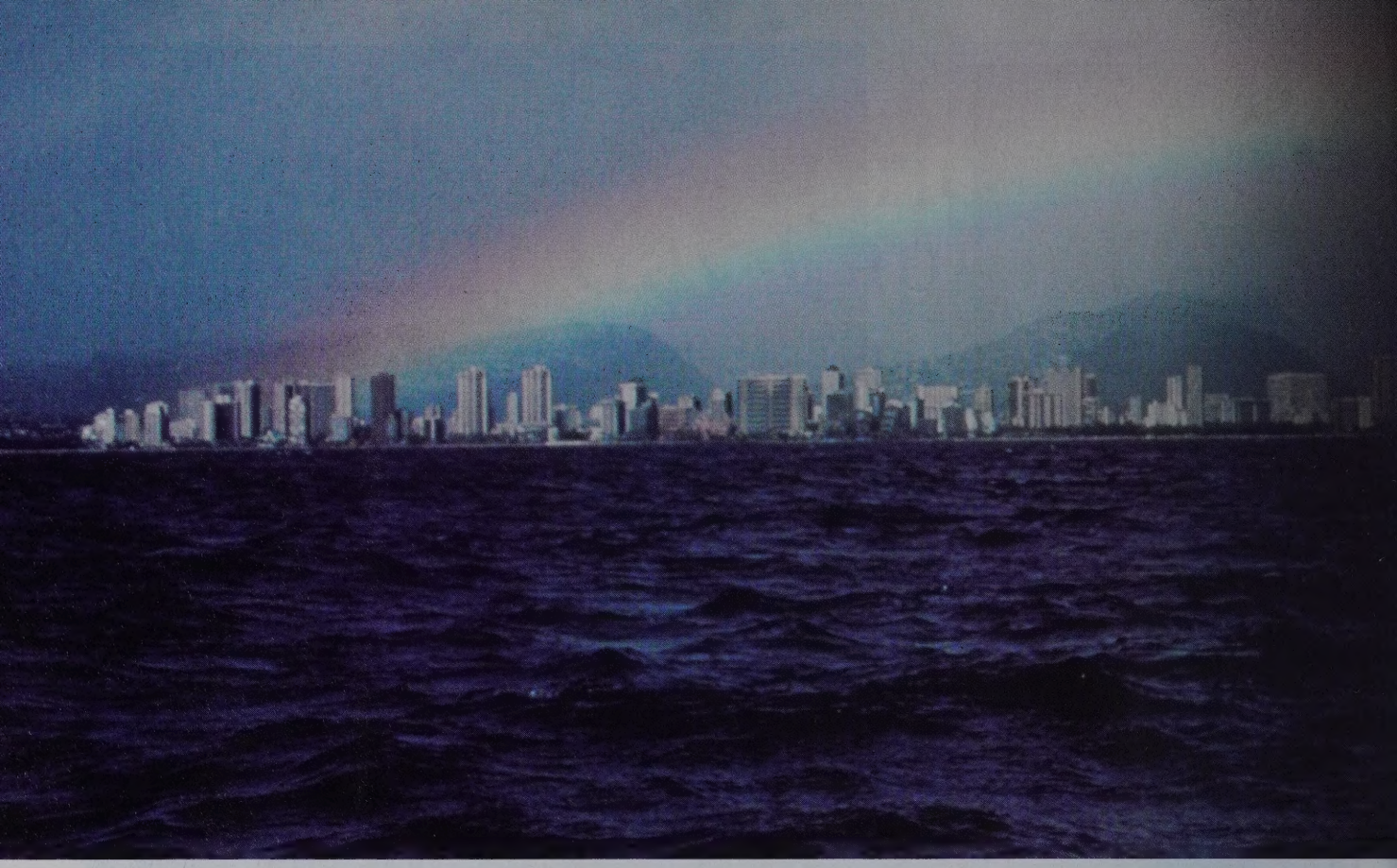
For the adventurous with at least three to four days to spare, Kruger Park is a must. The park is situated in the lowveld regions on two million acres between the Limpopo and Crocodile Rivers of the Mpumalanga province. Kruger Park is home to almost 150 species of mammals, over 500 bird species, 114 reptile species, 50 fish species and over 300 tree species. There are many game parks and wildlife preserves to be seen in South Africa. Awaken to the twitter of birds or even the roar of wild animals during your stay in a game park.

Visitors with deeper pockets and extra time can travel in neighboring Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique or Zimbabwe.

Cape Town is attracting hundreds of thousand of foreign tourists each year and has ambitions of rivaling San Francisco as the world's lesbian and gay capital.

TRAVEL INFO

Kosmos Travel
P.O. Box 1508, Harare, S.A.
753353/4, 755501/2.
South African Man Holidays,
tel: 434-1082
Dumile African Voyages,
tel: 4233-905
Africa Outing, Tel: 614-028
Long Street Turkish Baths
Tel: 4003302. Women are welcome on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays.
The Gin Mill Bar,
19 Lower-Main Road, Observatory, Cape Town
Café Manhattan, on the corner of Dixon and Waterkant Streets. Tel: 236666.



Destination Hawaii

by Rosalind Christine Lloyd

If you want to sojourn in paradise surrounded by luxurious plants and golden beaches, Hawaii should be your destination --especially if you're black, lesbian, gay, or transgendered. Hawaii has many gay and lesbian-owned businesses ranging from bed and breakfast to luxury hotels. Hawaii is a serious gay destination, but don't expect a party scene. Hawaii is faithful to its "hang loose" lifestyle. Listed below are places you might enjoy.

Honolulu, Oahu

Honolulu, Oahu, is the third largest of the Hawaiian Islands and is considered the "major" island. Honolulu is also the hub of night life for lesbians and gays. You won't need to rent a car. Taxis are in abundance and public buses run regularly. Besides, most things are within a healthy walking distance.

Gay night life - Angles is a neighborhood bar that opens early in the day and Fusions, a nightclub next door, picks up late at night. Fusions boasts all-male strip revues and the best female impersonator shows in Hawaii. The vibe was about the friendliest I've ever felt. Other party choices include In-Between, Hula's Bar & Lei Stand, Michelangeo's. Get this! There's even a Venus Nightclub.

Family Accommodations - Hotel Honolulu, The Aston Waikiki Joy Hotel and The Cabana at Waikiki.

Friendly & Reasonably priced- Any property by Outrigger. This hotel chain is all over the Hawaiian Islands. These sophisticated natives won't bat an eye when you and your lover ask for a king-sized bed.

Mainstream Deluxe - The Hilton Hawaiian Village and the Sheraton Royal Hawaiian will not disappoint if luxury is what you seek.

Tourist Attractions - Besides the famous Waikiki beach, there's The USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor, The Polynesian Cultural Center, Hanauma Bay and Diamond Head Crater.

Gay Tourist Attraction Queen's Surf Beach in Kapiolani Park off Kalakaua Avenue at the Diamond Head end of Waikiki. This is the cruise beach away from the hustle and bustle of the resort crowd.

Maui

Maui is my favorite of all the Hawaiian islands. We enjoyed a panaromic view of both ocean and mountains from our one-bedroom tree house. We frolicked au naturel, sipped Mai Tai's and lounged around a private pool.

Gay Tourist Attraction-Little Makena Beach, the Gay/Nude beach reached only by a 20 foot climb of volcanic

Downtown Honolulu, left, after a rain shows off it's natural pride. Above, The Big Island's Kilauea erupts.

black rock. The work is well worth the treat.

Tourist Attractions - Haleakala Crater (House of the Sun), Maui's dormant volcano is the largest in the world. The 2 1/2-hour cliff-hugging journey to the summit (10,023 feet above sea level) was spellbinding. Watching the sunrise as you stand above the clouds was awesome.

If you must do a Luau, try the Old Lahaina Luau, owned and operated by a gay couple and voted one of the finest on the Island.

Family Accommodations - Anfora's Dreams, Andrea & Janet Maui Condos, Jack & Tom Maui Condos. Friendly & Reasonably priced - Royal Lahaina Resort.

Mainstream Deluxe -The Renaissance Wailea is a friendly deluxe resort property as is The Hyatt Regency.

Big Island, Hawaii

Think, active volcano! Kilauea volcano spews enough lava to increase the island's land mass. Kilauea has had a continuous volcanic eruption since 1983. The bubbling craters create miles of virgin beaches of jet-black sand. If your're brave enough, or crazy enough, you can actually stand within a few feet of the eruption.

Gay Night Life-The island has one gay bar, Mask, and a popular gay beach.

Family Accommodations - Rainbow Inn, Hale Aloha Guest Ranch and Hale Kipa 'O Pele B&B. Friendly & Reasonably priced - Kauai Coconut Beach Resort. Mainstream Deluxe - Hilton Waikoloa Village,

Gay Tourist Attraction - The far end of Honokohau Beach and Kehena Beach.

Kauai

Kauai is the most tropical of all the islands. It is the oldest and by far the most picturesque. Waterfalls, sea cliffs, canyons, winding rivers, papaya trees and miles of white sand beaches are its treasures. While you're there, Waimea Canyon, the "Grand Canyon of the Pacific," is worthy of a helicopter ride to see.

Family Accommodations - Aloha Kauai and Pali Kai, both Bed and Breakfast Inns. Friendly & Reasonably priced - Kauai Coconut Beach Resort.

Gay Tourist Attraction - Donkey Beach. Lydgate State Park also has a gay beach area between the condominiums and golf course.

For more travel information contact your travel agent or the Hawaii Visitors & Convention Bureau at (808) 254-4665.

Summer Sizzles in Gay Paris

Paris is one of the most popular vacation spots in the world. It offers a variety of cultural, gastronomic and architectural treasures. Few people realize that France has become a multiracial society, largely due to its African, Caribbean and Asian colonial past. Other European, North and South American countries also contribute significantly to the French "melting pot."

During the era of the Annees Folles when jazz was introduced to the French and the Parisian love affair with black culture was born, black musicians, artists and Harlem Renaissance writers found 1920s Paris ready to embrace them with open arms. Montmarte became the center of the small community with jazz clubs such as Le Grand Duc, Chez Florence and Bricktop's.

Langston Hughes' first experience in Paris revolved around the lively area where he served as a busboy at Le Grand Duc. Blacks opened restaurants and other businesses in the neighborhood as well. Although artists such as Henry O. Tanner and Augusta Savage tended to establish themselves on the Left Bank, the majority of activity for the African American community occurred in Montmarte.

The ultimate example of African American success in Paris is the career of Josephine Baker. Opening at the Theatre des Champs Elysses in 1925, "La Baker" took the town by storm with her Danse Sauvage. She adopted France as her home, going undercover for the Resistance during WWII, starting her Rainbow Tribe in the French countryside and dying in the French Capital 50 years after she was catapulted to fame and fortune.

James Baldwin also spent a great deal of time in Paris, even though he never considered it to be home. He traveled between France and American several times, ultimately resigning himself to becoming a permanent expatriate.

Today, African Americans continue to settle in Paris despite the evidence of racism in French society, particularly the bigotry of the political party called the National Front. Black Americans often find their American citizenship carries more weight than the color of their skin. In addition, the presence of black enclaves from African and

VAN DE ZEE

"Gay and lesbian travelers from all over the world will be happy to know that the city has a thriving and active gay population"

Caribbean nations offer African American a chance to experience black culture in a way they cannot in their native countries.

Gay and lesbian travelers from all over the world will be happy to know that Paris has a thriving and active gay population that supports a large number of clubs and associations, bars, and restaurants, bookstores and night spots.

For those who love street festivals, summer is a grand time to visit the French capital. Three events occurring annually between mid-June and mid-July come highly recommended and make a trip to Paris worth considering.

La Fete de la Musique (the Music Festival) held on June 21 every year celebrates the official beginning of summer. It will have a special feature this year - the beltway surrounding Paris will be transformed into a giant stage, with floats throughout the city. The festival is free and is the party of the year for Parisians and their suburban neighbors.

Paris also hosts a Gay Pride parade held on a Saturday in June. This has been a tradition since 1977. The week before the parade, several events celebrating gay and lesbian pride are held throughout the city. Concerts, art exhibitions, film festivals and receptions are sponsored by various organizations supporting the community. On Saturday, thousands of people dressed in colorful costumes fill the streets, and floats with musical groups and political activists make their way through the crowds spreading their messages with passion and enthusiasm. This year's parade is to be held on June 24. For merrymaking at its best, it is an event not to be missed.

Finally, the balls preceding Bastille Day (July 14 - the equivalent of July 4 in America) are yet another excuse for reveling in the streets and along the Seine. These are held on the evening of July 13. Perhaps the most popular of the dances held on this evening is the one on the quai de la Tournelle next to the river. It lasts until dawn and is free to all.

Discover Paris!

How to get there: - an African American-owned agency --personalizes itineraries for independent travelers and wants to ensure that each of its customers enjoys an intimate, enchanting journey to the City of Lights. For more information: www.discoverparis.net or info@discoverparis.net.

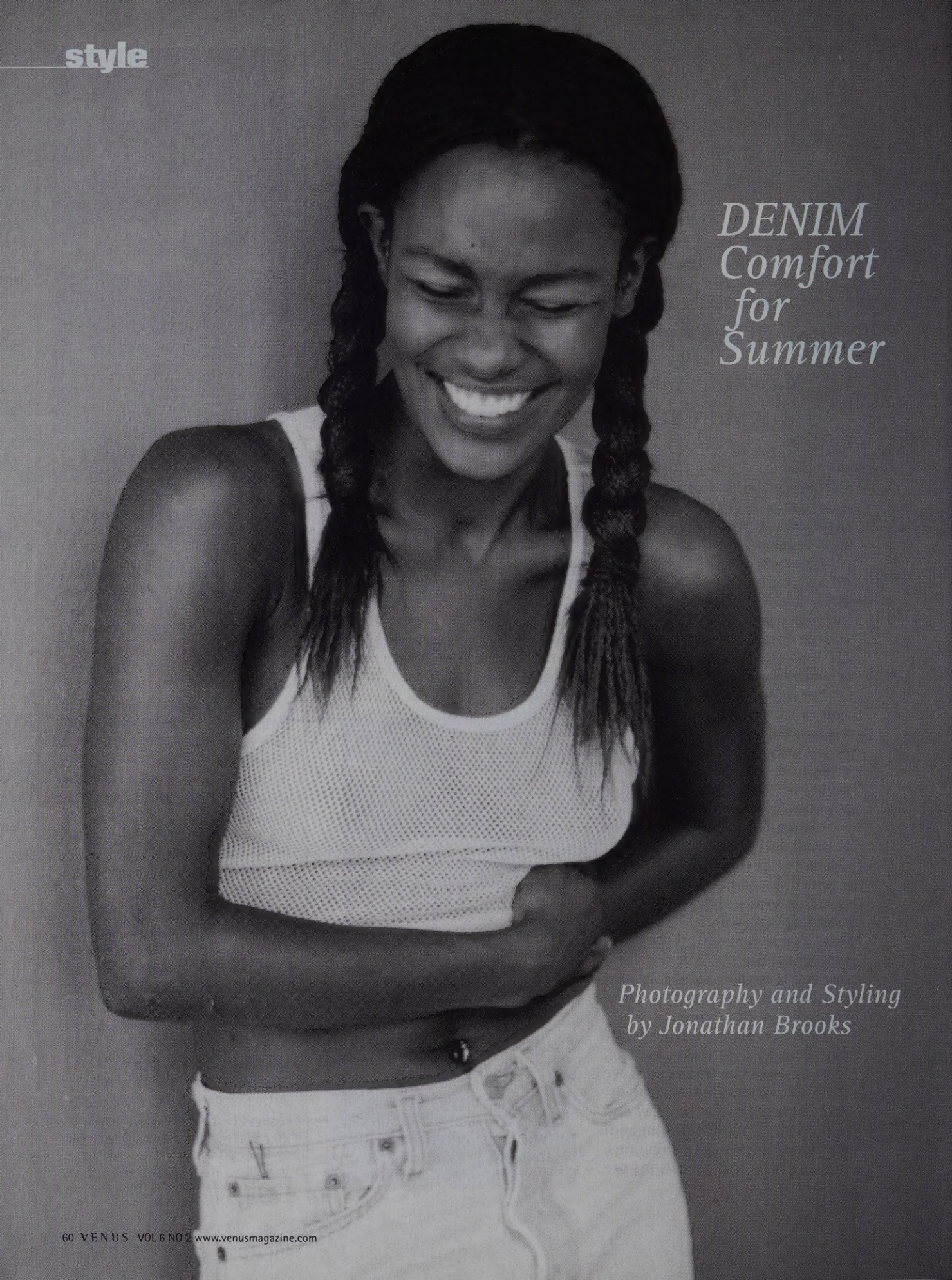
City Life

City Life Hotel Group's HABITAT HOTEL & ON THE AVENUE have redefined the hotel stay in New York by presenting Manhattan's sophisticated style at a budget price. Styled by New York designer Waren Bohn, the newly-renovated rooms feature sleek furnishings, vanity with dressing area, cable television, and internet access and more all with in minutes of your favorite museums, bars, restaurants, unique shopping, and sports arenas.

HABITAT HOTEL: Designed for the active traveler whose focus is on experienceing New York to the fullest. Located at 130 East 57th (Lexington Ave. 200 rooms. Rates: $75-$230/night.

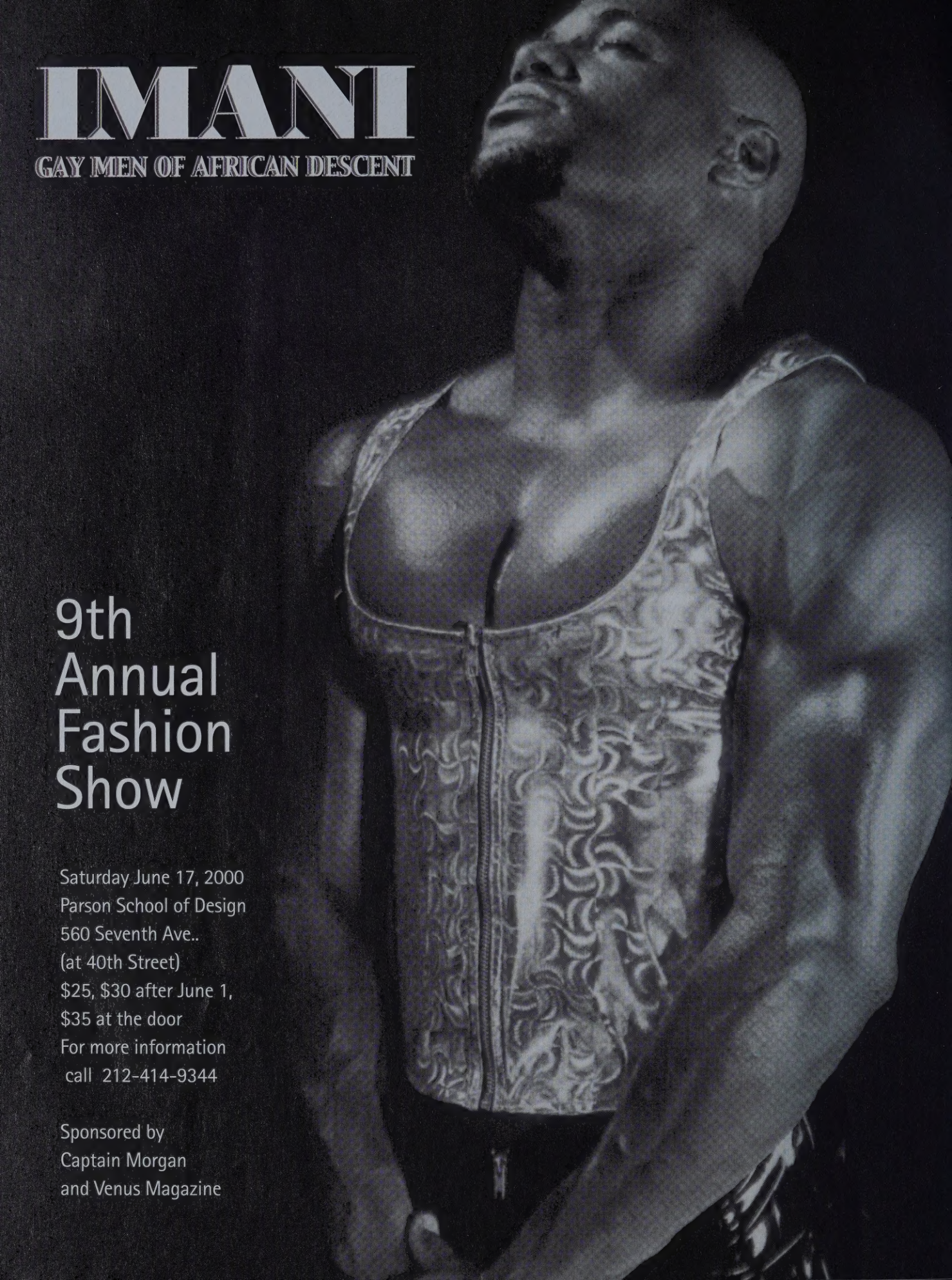
For reservations, www.habitat-ny.com or call 1-800-255-0842.

ON THE AVENUE: Meticulously decorated rooms present striking furnishings in an environment rich with texture and light. Located on Mahattan's Upper West side at 2178 Broadway at 77th St. Rates: $175-$225. For reservations, www.ontheave-ny.com, or call 1-800-509-7598.



DENIM Comfort for Summer

Photography and Styling by Jonathan Brooks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Contact us at Chicago Black Pride, Inc. 773-731-8665
or visit our website at http://www.chicagoblackpride.org

Design Concept: Israel Wright
iwright294@aol.com

Strings

Strings is the first femal emcee representing sultry crooner Keith Sweats label. Strings is truly making waves in this male dominated Rap Game. Black Widow is the title of her much anticipated debut release on Epic/Sweat Records. Strings AKA Marina describes
herself as that of a string section in an orchestra. Strings is an intrigal part of Rap Music . SwizzBeatz rocks several cuts on this get up out your seat and shake your assCD. The first single "Raise It Up" featuring Drag On and Wild Cat is the epitome of a Swizz Beatz, Rough Ryder styled anthem. Also included in the ingredients that make up this CD is Juvenile and the Hot Boys. Chicago born Strings brings to the table years of experience. She was not your average silver spoon fed baby girl. Girlfriend is a classic Cinderella and the 6 inch spiked slippers kinda girl.
As a young diva in training, Strings was blessed with her daughter which helped boost her into womanhood. With her dislike and uncomfortability with a life of poverty Strings stepped out and became an Exotic Dancer. Dancing open many doors for her. While dancing she met R. Kelly who signed her and featured her on his Gotham City Remix, although their union was short Strings cherishes every moment.

Her manager introduced her to his long time friend Keith Sweat who immediately signed her. Strings sacrificed a little and got a lot. With a strong determination she can only go up. Strings writes her own Lyrics, and she 's always equipped with her rhyminary and her dictionary. She's not only a rapper, this girl can sang and play the drums. This sexy Sagittarius celebrates life on Thanksgiving Day, what a treat. Pussy is the most controversial track on this CD, its filled to brim with lyrics describing why this world wouldn't exist without it. Making no bones she clearly directs this song to all of those people who have a problem with the word Pussy. Black Widow is the CD of the Millennium, don't get caught without your copy OK IM out...

by Nigel Jackson.

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BOSTON CHURCH

and from experts in "biological, psychological and sociological" fields as well as personal testimonies from homosexuals, their friends and families within the church. From their report in 1996 a course of study was created for Methodist Congregations to use. The Rev. Ted Lockhart, responding in true Wesleyan tradition, ordered the materials so members could inform themselves and understand the issues.

In the Spring of 1997, a class was formed to discuss the findings by the commission which were presented in unbiased manner so as to allow congregational members to decide for themselves what they believed was right. Reverend Wesley Williams from United Methodist Urban Services came to the church to discuss the special plight of black gays and lesbians, Ed McClain of Pride Lights, Matthew Florence, then director of MOCAA (Men of Color Against AIDS), and others in the GLBT community were asked to sit down and give their views.

By the fall of 1999, the Statement as a Reconciling and Inclusive Church had been in circulation and discussion for more than a year. On February 15, 2000, the Church Council of Union United Methodist Church voted unanimously to adopt the statement, to publish it and to take steps to affiliate themselves with the Reconciling Congregations Program, a movement of United Methodist "individuals, congregations, campus ministries, and other groups which publicly welcomed all persons, regardless of sexual orientation."

"... I pass at least five predominantly African-American churches in Cambridge and Boston on my way to Union ... because I want to be connected with a church where I can be all of who I am: a black man, a gay man, an educated man, and most importantly, a man who is totally in love with God," said Union Member Douglas Brooks, who serves on the Pastor Parish Relations Committee. Last Spring a worship service was organized specifically to celebrate the adoption and acceptance of the statement by Bishop Susan Wolfe Hassinger of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Churches.

continued from pg. 35

DRED KING

kindergaarten. I didn't know what to call it then, but I knew . . . my crushes and stuff . . . whatever. I had the feelings. I told my Mom I was gay over ten years ago. She doesn't understand it, but she's come to see the show and loved it.

Dred describes herself as "fluid," not butch or fem. She loves being a woman and doesn't want to be man. "Live and let live," she says of those who may want to make the gender transformation.

"I feel that we should all feel free to express ourselves in whatever way that may be. I am very spiritual and in tune with the higher power. I am thankful for the blessings I've received."

Oh, by the way, about that bulge, . . . a Washington-State Big Red, . . . "the forbidden fruit."

_SVD

To see more of Dred King, check her website www.dredking.com or contact her at 212.946.4475; email:dredking@hotmail.com.

SAVE THE DATES: Wed., August 2, 2000 – Sunday, August 6th

Some of the Planned Events during the four day celebration:

Opening Cultural Celebration • Community Picnic/Festival • Black Pride Ball • Beach Party

HOST HOTEL:

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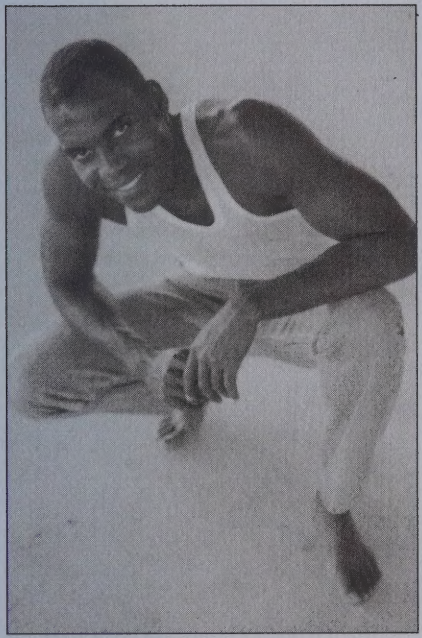
Look for updates on our website@ www.blackpridenyc.com or call our hotline (212) 613-0097

BLACK PRIDE NYC



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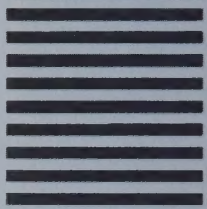

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continued from pg. 32
BRENDA RUSSELL

film entitled "Liberty Heights" were I get to play the singing girl in the night club scene (she laughs) it takes place in the 50's. I was sorta playing a Billie Holiday type character with a gardenia in my hair.

Venus: What is your ingredient to successfully writing a song for yourself and others?
Russell: I try to write songs for myself that other people would like, because I find when I try to tailor a song for someone else, it's not always on the mark because you're usually dealing with a past impression of them, where as they're trying to present a new impression. I learned this lesson years ago shortly after the release of my first album. Aretha Franklin heard and loved my album. She was so inspired that she asked me to write a song for her. I wrote this song for her in my impression of what she would sing. Aretha rejected it and made it clear, she wanted a Brenda Russell song.

Venus: Did you ever get her that song?
Russell: No, because I was so devastated I had to regroup.

Venus: That could take years, (laughing)
Russell: I know, I'm still regrouping, (laughing)

Venus: Do you realize the impact you have on your listeners?
Russell: I only realize it when I get out there and people come up to me and tell me. That to me is worth more than gold records. When I was on tour this past Christmas a gentleman came up to me and expressed how he was having a nervous breakdown and how "Get Here" helped him come back to himself. He caught me back stage just when I was in the midst of self doubt and not happy with my performance. I was like, 'girl you better back up!' This man is pouring his heart out to you telling you how much he has been healed by your music and how he enjoyed the show and was having a great time. I've learned to get out of my way and I believe that our purpose in life is much bigger than we perceive.

Cool Me Summer

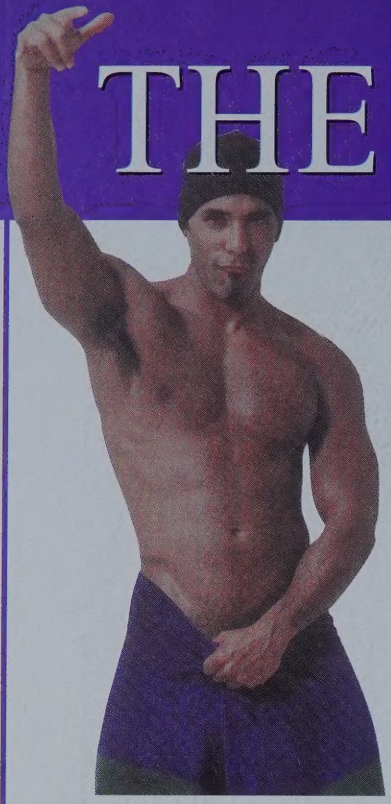
Martinis are the celebrated cocktail and symbol of finesse, accomplishment and elegance. A well-chilled Bombay Sapphire martini takes your taste buds around the world. Its ten unique botanicals cross climates and continents, introducing West Africa to Italy, and Saxony to Spain. Rich in both flavor and history, Bombay Sapphire Gin's complex blend of ten botanicals hail from three continents and nine countries. Here's the low down.

1. Almonds - Bitter almonds from Spain bring a nutty aroma and spicy flavor and add their own complicated twist as they require special handling to release their essence.
2. Lemon Peels - Lemon peels from Spain contributes to the high concentration of lemon oils for fresh and juicy flavor.
3. Licorice root - A variety of lookers cultivated in China is grounded into powder and valued for its fresh light flavor.
4. Juniper Berries - The superior variety of these, bluish berries from northern Italy, can take up to three years to ripen on the bush. Juniper is the primary flavoring agent of gin.
5. Orris, aka Iris root - Another rarity, Orris is gleaned from pale blue iris flowers grown in Florence, Italy.
6. Angelic root - Essential for the dry texture associated with gin, this root from the Saxony region of Germany offers musky, sweet pine nuances and an impression of dryness to the palate
7. Coriander - These seeds from Morocco impart a citrus flavor to gin.
8. Cassia Bark - This stem bark from Indo-China was internationally traded as early as 3000 BC. It is valued for its mild cinnamon flavor.
9. Cubeb Berries- A member of the pepper family, the small red-brown Cubebs are grown in Java, Indonesia. They have spicy, pepper aroma and contribute flavors of lemon and pine.
10. Grains of Paradise- Perhaps these ginger family seeds from West Africa were added by chilly Brits with practical hopes . . . in their countries of origin, these seeds are chewed on cold days to keep warm. they add both lavender and a spicy, peppery warmth to Bombay Sapphire.

Blue Martini
1-1/2 Gin, 1/2 oz. Dry Vermouth, 1/2 oz. Blue Curacao. Shake well with ice and strain into chilled martini glass. Garnish with a lime twist.

Gin Buck
1-1/4 oz Gin, Ginger Ale Serve over ice in Highball Glass, Garnish with Lemon Wedge

THE BLACK PRIDE



Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day

May 24-29, Washington, D.C. For info 800-94BLGPD, www.dcblackpride.org

Change is Good!

For the first time in it's history DC Black Pride's main Event will not be dependent upon the cooperation of Mother Nature. The traditional outdoor festival held on Sunday has been moved from wet or sun-stroked Banneker Field to the climate controlled environment of the Washington Convention Center. Nearly 20,000 are expected to attend the celebration including celebrity headliners.

Best: The Festival! Something New for the Kids!
Don't Miss: Elements; "Are you ready?" by ChocolateCityUSA.com

Tampa Jamz 2000

June 9-11, Tampa FL
For info 800-233-1234, www.clikque.com

Sunshine State Beach Party

Clikque Magazine presents Tampa Jamz 2000 for Florida's Finest.

Atlanta event organizers team up with People of Color AIDS Coalition to throw a Beach Bash, Florida style. Excellent DJs, [hey Keith!]; then the weekend gets wet and wild with the beach affair and endless shows and parties. First year but almost guaranteed to be a winner! Host Hotel Hyatt Hotels & Resorts at Two Tampa Center Downtown, Tampa.

Best: Wet N' Wild Beach Party
Don't Miss: The Diva Revue featuring the legendary Niesha Dupree

Oakland BGLT Pride Celebration

June 16-18 Oakland, CA
For Info 510-268-0646, www.BLGT.org

It's Natural!

In it's third year, BGLT Pride in Oakland is fired-up! Planning began just months after last year's event giving Oakland's Kids a good reason to invite friends from around the country and world to share in a culturally sensitive, educational, sun and fun-filled weekend.

Best: It's Natural Conference, an all day event
Don't Miss: Marlon Riggs Achievement Awards; Outdoor Festival at Lake Merritt in Oakland.

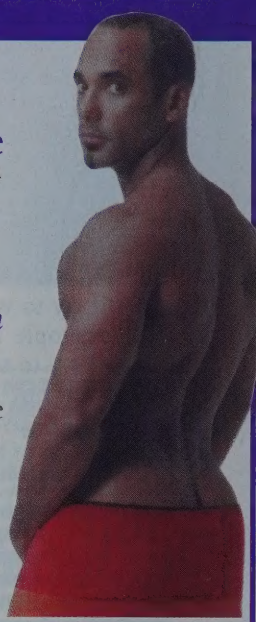
At The Beach

June 30-July 3 Los Angeles, CA
For info 323-293- 4ATB, Email: atbla@aol.com

When You're Hot You're Hot!

When major corporate sponsors compete for exclusive rights to your event, you know you're Hot! Shorey, Inc. is bustling and busy preparing the final details for what has become known as the THEE crowning jewel of Black Prides. If you can only get to one this year, make this the one! Pack your thongs, and don't forget your sunglasses. You'll need them to hide your roaming eyes. No need to bring sand to the beach. . . this event is a singles paradise! Ladies---- cleavage everywhere!

Best: The Body Contest [Abs, pecs & thighs galore!]
Don't Miss: The Annual Fashion Show hosted by International Male Catalog



Chicago Black Pride

June 29-JULY 4
For Info 773-731-8665, www.chicago-pride.org

An Explosion of Heritage

Chicago's second annual Black Pride is billed as a 'Convention' this year. Seminars and workshops and a youth initiative are at the focus of the weekend which kicks off with an elaborate Pool party. Controversy among the kids exists because the City of Chicago has asked organizers to present their main event on a Lakefront community describe best as 'the 'hood.' Chicago Black Pride sees this as a unique opportunity to connect with community. Just that combined efforts of the Rails, Affinity, A Real Read, FuFu Entertainment, the Greater Chicago Committee and many others will assure an over-the top event.

Best: The Annual Fashion Show sponsored by International Male Catalog
Don't Miss: The Annual Poetry Slam

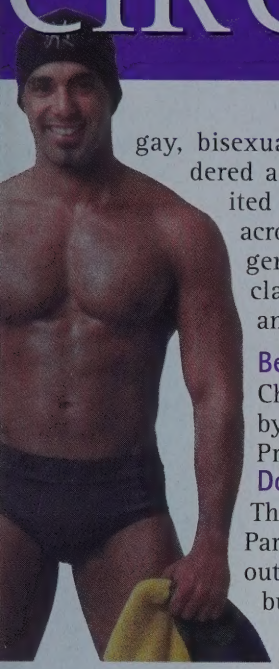
Black Pride NYC

Aug. 2-6, 2000 Brooklyn, New York Marriot
For info 212-613-0097, www.blackpridenyc.com

Wake Up in NYC!

The city that never sleeps will host Black Gay Pride at the brand new Brooklyn Marriot. The weeked of celebration will include a cultural celebration, a community picnic and festival, The Black Pride Ball, a beach party, workshops and literary events. Black Pride NYC is committed to building and strengthening lesbian,

CIRCUIT GUIDE 2000



gay, bisexual, transgendered and two-spirited communities across barriers of gender, age, class, culture and religion.

Best: Back Chat, hosted by Carribean Pride
Don't Miss: The Beach Party. Washed out last year but guaranteed to have a wild time if the weather holds up.

Black Unity Pride Celebration

Aug. 3-6, 2000 Cleveland, OH
For info: shakaspr94@aol.com

Brothers & Sisters Coming Together in 2000

BUPC was formed in response to the need to establish community coalition building between various black gay businesses. Their mission is to produce several cultural events that will promote positive self images, diversity and influence healthy relationships among same gender loving people of African descent.

Best: Chic 2000's Evening of Elegance
Don't Miss: BlackOUT Conference, Comedy Expo, Edgewater Park

PLAN AHEAD FOR NEXT YEAR!

Philadelphia Black Gay Pride

April 27-30, 2000
For Info 215-496-0330, www.geocities.com/phlblkpride

Brotherly & Sisterly Love!

The first unified pride event for Philly's black community went off without a hitch. In the past, black pride events surrounded the University of Pennsylvania's Penn Relay weekend, but this year many people involved in the events decided to come together as a team to create Philadelphia Black Gay Pride Inc. The result was a four-day weekend of workshops and parties organizers which set a precedent for years to come.
Best: Annual Scholarship Breakfast with the Mayor
Don't Miss: Midnight cruise presented by the Phirm; 40 Acres of Change Youth Meeting

Houston Splash

May 4-8, 2000 For info: 713-237-9431, www.houstonsplash.com

The Wedding...Black Pride Texas Style!

Once again Houston Splash proves to be a real crowd pleaser. Using a weekend wedding theme, Entertainers pulled out all stops to blow out each night of the event including The Engagement strip party, The Rehearsal kick off party, The Reception, and of course a Bachelor and Bachelorette parties to name a few. Organized by high profile members of Houston's trans community this stop on the Pride circuit definitely translates into fun, fashion and Diva dish.

Best: The Splash Beach Party in beautiful Galveston
Don't Miss: The Honeymoon! Hot Body Revue

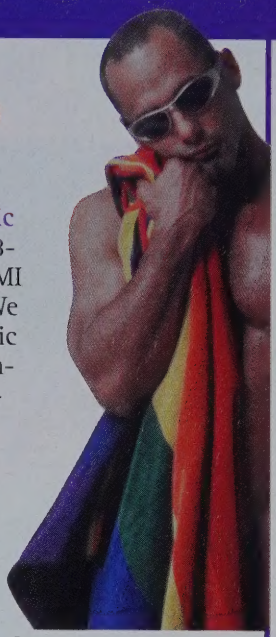
Unity Pride Splash 2000

May 5-7, 2000 Houston, TX
For info 1-888-526-0160
www.unity-pride-splash2000.com

One Nation, All Colors

Don't get 'Unity Pride Splash 2000' confused with Houston 'Splash'. Totally different event. Unity is promoted by Blacks, but encourages and expects attendance by people of all colors. This year's festivities included an over-the-top Welcome Party and an official After Party.

Best: The Alternative Park Event
Don't Miss: The After Beach Explosion



For Sistahs Only!

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival Aug. 8-13; Walhalla, MI Produced by We Want The Music Co., www.michfest.com (231)-757-4766

SISTAH SummerFest June 9-11 in West Virginia--an hour and a half from Washington D. C. Email: Sistahfest@aol.com Online registration at www.sistahsummerfest.com or call 301-961-1014.

Uloah's SISTAHfest 2000- October 5-8, 2000 This is the event that you don't want to miss! Call 323-960-5051 e-mail: ULOAH@aol.com, www.uloah.com.

For Brothas Only!

Brother-to-Brother's Retreat, Oct., Malibu, CA, call 323-964-7820.
Adodi Annual Men's Retreat Aug., Litchfield,CT, call-312-458-9584

AT A GLANCE

At The Beach	June 30-July 4
Chicago Black Pride	June 30-July 4
Cleveland Black Pride	Aug. 4-6
Dallas Black Pride	Oct. 5-8
D.C. Black Gay Pride	May 24-29
Hotter than July	July 18-25
Houston Splash	May 4-8
In The Life Atlanta	Sept. 1-4
Oakland Black Pride	June 16-18
Philly Black Pride	April 27-29
Tampa Jamz	June 9-11
Unity Pride, Houston	May 5-7

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www.bizman.2000.com

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Newark, NJ 07101
(201) 591-2330

BuyingGuide

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by Towels of Key West - The Rainbow Collection, Robes, Body Wraps, Kitchen, Sports Towels, 100% cotton. www.rainbowtowels.com. or call 800-927-0316. Gay owned and staffed.

Atlantic Luggage Co.
Professional 2.0, $99-$199, Hardside Vault under $200, Call 1.888.8.ATLANTIC www.atlanticluggage.com

Aveda Beauty Products
Available at Aveda Environmental Lifestyle Stores, Aveda Concepts Salons and Spas worldwide in June.

Red Door Salon & Spa
by Elizabeth Arden, 691 Fifth Avenue at 54th Street, New York, NY 212-546-0200

Kiss My Ass Moisurizing Body Balms available at Anushka Day Spa 241 E. 60th Street, btwn 2nd and 3rd 212-355-6404

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Habitat Hotel: 130 East 57th Lexington Ave. 200 rooms. Rates: $75-$230/night. For reservations, www.habitat-ny.com or call 1-800-255-0842.

On The Ave: Mahattan's Upper West side at 2178 Broadway at 77th St. Rates: $175-$225. For reservations, www.ontheave-ny.com, or call 1-800-509-7598.

EventsCalendar

SISTAH SummerFest
June 9-11 in West Virginia
Email: Sistahfest@aol.com
Online registration at
www. sistahsummerfest.com

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June 9-11, Tampa FL
For info 800-233-1234, www.clikque.com

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Adodi Annual Men's Retreat
Aug., Litchfield,CT, call-312-458-9584

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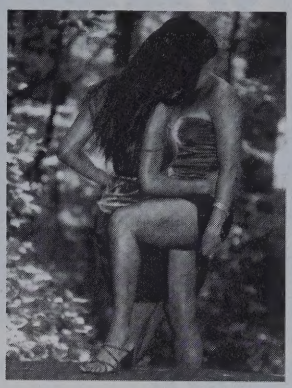

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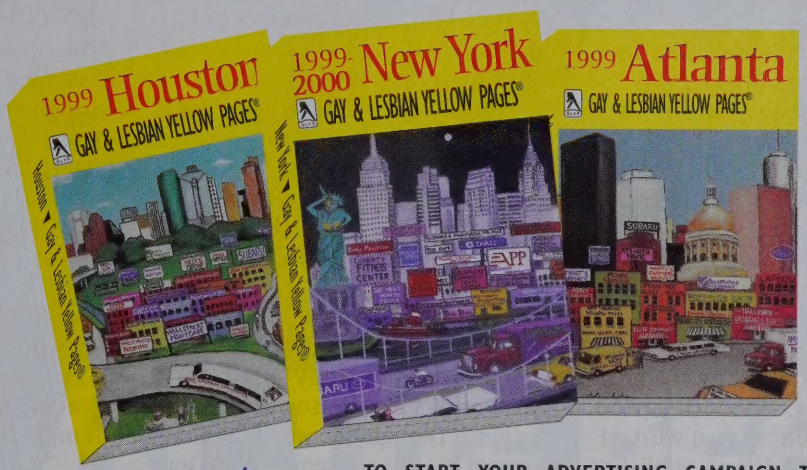

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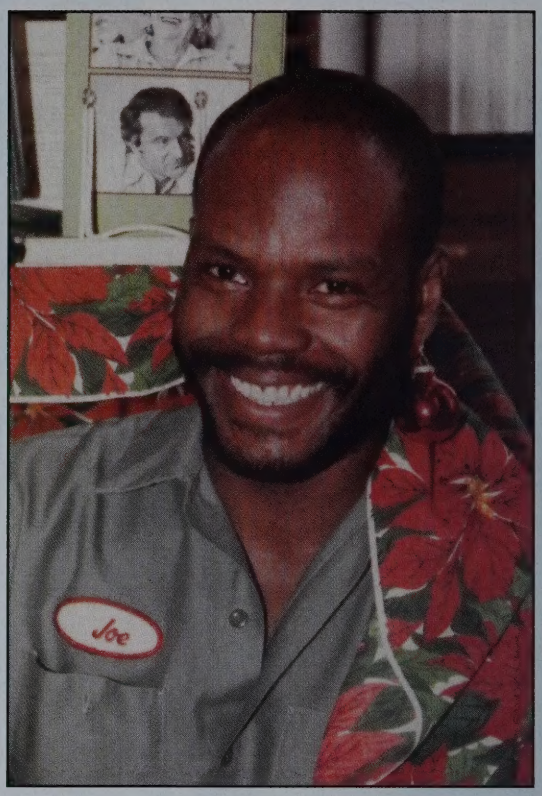
In Remembrance Joseph F. Beam

1954-1988



"It was imperative for my survival that I did not attend to, or believe, the images presented of black people or gay people. Perhaps that was the beginning of my passage from passivism to activism, that I needed to create my reality, that I needed to create images by which I, and other black gay men to follow, could live this life."

From Beam's the essay, "Making Ourselves From Scratch"

Editor and writer Joseph Beam spent his short life trying to empower black gay men. His book, In The Life, published in 1986, is a seminal volume in African-American literature . In The Life anthologizes writings by black gay men, the first book of its kind.

"There are many reasons for gay black invisibility," Beam wrote in the book's introduction. "Hard words come to mind: power, racism, conspiracy, oppression, and privilege--each deserving of a full-fledged discussion of gay history books yet unwritten."

Beam died before he finished his second book, Brother to Brother, a companion anthology to In the Life. His friend, Essex Hemphill, completed the unfinished work after Beam's death. It was published in 1991. When asked if Beam and Hemphill were friends and lovers, Mrs. Dorothy Beam, Joseph Beam's mother, exclaimed, "Oh, no! They were just friends. I wish they had been lovers. Essex was such a wonderful person. When he asked if he could finish the book, I said 'Yes' and asked him to stay in my home."

Beam was born and raised in Philadelphia and attended public and private schools in that city, according to Mrs. Deborah Beam.

"He went to a Catholic high school before going to Franklin College in Indiana," Mrs. Beam told Venus. "He always wanted to be a writer and wrote lots of short stories. When he finished college he worked on a newspaper in Philadelphia."

Beam also worked as a waiter and at a local gay bookstore, Giovanni's Room, to support his writing. Through his which he challenged the silence imprisoning gay black men. Such silence was wrong, he felt. Gay black men were at all levels of society. "We have always existed in the African American community." he wrote. "We have been ministers, hairdressers, entertainers, sales clerks, civil rights activists, teachers, playwrights, trash collectors, dancers, government officials, choir masters, and dishwashers. You name it, we've done it--most often with scant recognition. We have mediated family disputes, cared for and reared our siblings, and housed our sick. We have performed many and varied important roles within our communities."

Beam was an important figure in our world who not only wrote incisive essays but was also an executive director of the National coalition of Black Lesbian and Gays. His mother established a scholarship fund in his name at Temple University.

"The bottom line is this. We are black men who are proudly gay. What we offer is our lives, our love, our visions . . .We are coming home with our heads held up high."

--Joseph F. Beam

DOROTHY S. BEAM

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